

# JOHN COTTON BROOKS

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BY

JAMES CLEMENT SHARP





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Yours, faithfully,  
John Cotton Brooke



# JOHN COTTON BROOKS

BY

JAMES CLEMENT SHARP

FORMERLY ASSISTANT MINISTER AT CHRIST CHURCH  
SPRINGFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS



CAMBRIDGE

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## PREFACE

THIS book is an attempt to put in a concrete and detailed form some facts of an active and successful ministry. In the midst of the changing religious thought and conditions of his time John Cotton Brooks exhibited a singleness of aim, with a consecration and a devotion to duty, that was as remarkable as it was fruitful. The first chapter contains a sketch of two Puritan families, — the Brooks and the Phillips, — from the time of their arrival on these New England shores until they were united two hundred years later by the marriage of William Gray Brooks and Mary Ann Phillips, — the parents of Mr. Brooks. The second

chapter is an account of the family influences of his early life. With these facts in mind we can better understand the forces which moulded his character and set his face towards the work he was to accomplish in later years. In the remaining chapters the emphasis is upon the Springfield ministry.

Mr. Brooks began his ministry at Christ Church, Springfield, Massachusetts, when the financial difficulties of the parish were very great. At the end of his first four years, when the debt had increased rather than diminished, he declined a unanimous call to become rector of the Church of the Intercession, New York City. Duty bade him remain and work out the problem to which he believed God had called him. For nearly a quarter of a century he labored to remove the debt. Meanwhile he

## PREFACE

v

succeeded in building up Christ Church, until it became at the time of his death the second largest Episcopal parish in New England. The secret of his success was his pastoral love. He knew his people, and he won their friendship. He aimed to be with them in the trials and sorrows of life. Above all else his Church and his people came first.

He served the city as effectively as he did his parish. In his deep sense of justice, and in his patriotic impulses there glowed the fire which impelled him in every effort for social reform and civic betterment. In such work he was earnest, intelligent, and practical. He sought to ennoble and uplift the standard of living, morally and spiritually in the city, as he did in the Church. His self-sacrificing spirit in helping humanity, both within

and without his parish, stands conspicuous as a witness to his simple but profound faith in God and man.

He preached Jesus Christ with an earnestness and conviction that brought sure and lasting results. At times he was eloquent, always persuasive, aiming to lead his people to a spiritual outlook, that they might see their own capacities for higher and nobler living. His purpose was to instruct in God's word, to arouse the conscience, and to make real the power of God and Christ.

In the hope that this book may be of interest to his parishioners and friends, and in some measure a source of help and inspiration to others into whose hands it may fall, — perchance to young men entering the ministry of Jesus Christ, — I send it forth as the record of the life of a good and consecrated man.

## PREFACE

vii

The materials for the making of this brief biography have come from the reminiscences of his parishioners and friends, and from my own association with Mr. Brooks for more than seven years as assistant minister. To the late Rev. A. V. G. Allen, D.D., of Cambridge, I am indebted for advice and encouragement in beginning this book, and to the members of the family, Mrs. John Cotton Brooks, and the Misses Brooks, Mr. William Gray Brooks, and Rev. Daniel Dulany Addison, D.D., for their sympathy and assistance. To Messrs. E. P. Dutton and Company, the publishers of the life of Phillips Brooks, I am indebted for the kind permission to use some extracts from letters. To the Rt. Rev. William Lawrence, D.D., Bishop of Massachusetts, and to Rev. George Hodges, D.D., Dean of the Epis-

copal Theological School at Cambridge,  
I am deeply grateful for generous help  
and kind suggestions.

J. C. S.

WABAN (NEWTON), MASS., May, 1909.



## CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. TWO PURITAN FAMILIES . . . . .	13
II. THE EARLY YEARS . . . . .	26
III. THE BEGINNING OF THE SPRINGFIELD MINISTRY . . . . .	43
IV. THE GROWTH OF THE PARISH . . . . .	57
V. THE SUCCESS OF THE SOCIETIES . . . . .	72
VI. TRAITS THAT HELPED . . . . .	91
VII. BEYOND THE PARISH . . . . .	101
VIII. THE PREACHER . . . . .	120
IX. THE MINISTER OF CONSOLATION . . . . .	140
X. TWO MEMORABLE SERVICES . . . . .	158
XI. THE LAST VOYAGE . . . . .	178



## ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
PORTRAIT OF THE REV. JOHN COTTON BROOKS	
<i>Frontispiece</i>	
CHRIST CHURCH . . . . .	50
THE PARISH HOUSE . . . . .	50
THE RECTORY . . . . .	92
MR. BROOKS IN HIS VESTMENTS . . . . .	120



# JOHN COTTON BROOKS

## CHAPTER I

### TWO PURITAN FAMILIES

IN the year 1630 Thomas Brooks heard the first sermon preached in Watertown, Massachusetts. The Minister was Rev. George Phillips. These two were the first ancestors of John Cotton Brooks to settle in this country, and they were also among the first settlers of Watertown. A family record tells us that in company with Governor John Winthrop they arrived at Salem Harbor in the ship "Arabella," the twelfth of June, 1630. Thomas Brooks lived a few years in Watertown, and then moved to Concord. He was a well-to-do farmer, as is evidenced by his

## 14 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

purchase of a farm at Medford, on which his son Caleb settled after his marriage, and there two sons, Ebenezer and Samuel, were born to him. From this time the Brooks family is closely identified with the history of Medford.

In the year 1635 Thomas Boylston arrived at Boston. His son, Dr. Thomas Boylston, had a family of twelve children, of whom one, named Peter, was a direct ancestor of John Adams, the second President of the United States. The name of Boylston was to become conspicuous later in the history of Boston and Harvard College. Abigail, a daughter of Dr. Boylston, married Ebenezer Brooks, and their grandson was John Brooks. At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War this John Brooks led a company at the battle of Lexington, fought at Bunker Hill and Saratoga, and step by step was raised in rank,

until at the battle of Monmouth he was acting adjutant-general. As a confidant and friend of Washington he attained a high place in the councils of the nation. After the Revolution he practised his profession as a physician, keeping in touch meanwhile with public life. He was Governor of Massachusetts for seven years, and died in 1825.

Through Samuel Brooks, the half-brother of Ebenezer, came the direct line of descent to John Cotton Brooks. He married Sarah Boylston, a sister of Abigail, and their son Samuel had a son of the same name, who had four sons and one daughter. It fell to Edward Brooks, the second son, to be the first representative of his family in the ministry. He settled at North Yarmouth, Maine, where differences between him and his parishioners arose, as to his theological doctrines.

## 16 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

He was more liberal than his congregation, and his anti-Calvinistic tendencies were to them a sore grievance. After giving them his blessing, and expressing the hope that "they may get another pastor who shall feed them with spiritual knowledge and understanding," he resigned his charge and returned to Medford. Although out of health when the call to arms came in 1775, but "with a competent share of courage," he hurried away from Medford to engage in the Concord fight. Afterwards, as chaplain of the frigate "Hancock," he was captured by the British and carried to Halifax, where he had the smallpox. He returned to Medford and died soon after, in 1781.

Abigail Brown, his wife, the daughter of Joanna Cotton of Haverhill, was the great-granddaughter of Rev. John Cotton, the first minister of Boston, and also



## TWO PURITAN FAMILIES 17

the great-grandmother of John Cotton Brooks. Their son, Cotton Brown Brooks, the grandfather of John Cotton Brooks, settled in Portland, Maine, where he became an honored citizen and a prosperous business man. His son, William Gray Brooks, at the age of nineteen came to Boston to seek his fortunes. His father's brother, Peter Chardon Brooks, lived at Medford, and to his house William went as a frequent visitor. Peter Chardon Brooks was said to be the richest man in Boston at the time of his death in 1849.

The members of the Brooks family were thus typical New Englanders. In early days they were tillers of the soil, and were prosperous. As time went on they came to the cities and were successful in business life. In the words of the family record, "Of the Brooks family who came to Medford from the time of the

## 18 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

first Caleb, they were worthy men in comfortable circumstances, rather rich for farmers, men of influence in town affairs. None except the Governor were men of distinction as magistrates, except that some of them were Justices of the Peace, and representatives to the General Court." When we turn to the Phillips family, we find them graduates of Harvard, ministers of great influence, men eminent in various offices of State, founders of institutions of learning, and men who showed by their acts a reverence for the past, and a deep responsibility as to the future. In Church, and State, and in social life they were conspicuous.

The Rev. George Phillips, who sailed with Governor Winthrop for New England in 1630, had been ordained in the Church of England. He cast his lot with the Puritans and came across the seas to

aid in establishing a new form of worship, for fourteen years ministering to the little settlement at Watertown. He died in 1644. Winthrop speaks well of him in his journal, as a scholar of ability and a good preacher. He was a lover of liberty, both political and religious, and guarded with a jealous eye any encroachments upon his own church rights by other churches or by the civil authorities. He believed in independent church government, and later his views were formulated into Congregationalism. As to political liberty, he remonstrated when the Governor levied a tax without the consent of the people, and before the next tax was levied two representatives were appointed from each plantation to consider the question he had raised.

The Rev. Samuel Phillips, his son, was graduated from Harvard College in 1650.

## 20 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

For forty-five years he labored in his parish at Rowley, until his death in 1696. His son of the same name became a goldsmith at Salem, and married Mary Emerson of Gloucester, a clergyman's daughter. Their son was the Rev. Samuel Phillips, the third of that name. He was graduated at Harvard and studied for the ministry, and in 1711 was ordained at the South Church, Andover. With his ministry begins the association of the Phillips family with the town of Andover. He was a stern Puritan, and as such is said to have been a representative spirit of the eighteenth century. A strong Calvinist, he preached with power, and wielded a great influence over the lives of his parishioners. An hour-glass upon his pulpit desk measured the length of his sermons. When family evening prayers were said his sense of economy

prompted him to blow out his candle, but he was able to send his sons to Harvard College, and give away a tenth of his income.

The Honorable Samuel Phillips, who represented the next generation, instead of entering the ministry chose a business career. He accumulated wealth and became active in political life. As a member of the House of Representatives and of the Council of the Commonwealth he was respected for his ability and character. He built the Phillips homestead at North Andover. His son Samuel, known as Judge Phillips, was the great-grandfather of John Cotton Brooks.

Judge Phillips was born in 1752. While at Harvard College he showed marked ability and diligence, standing seventh in his class, and he was the first president of the "Institute of 1770," a society still

## 22 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

popular at Harvard. It was in those days that a romance began which was to affect the future history of Andover. Phœbe Foxcroft was of a prominent Cambridge family, a woman of rare gifts and of a vivacious nature, but Phœbe happened to be nine years older than her lover, and his parents objected to their marriage. It was only Samuel's illness after his graduation that gained him their consent. They were married in 1773, and took up their new life at the old Phillips homestead in North Andover, and later, upon his presidential tour in 1789, Washington visited them. Judge Phillips became interested in many business enterprises, and during the Revolutionary War manufactured gunpowder, digging saltpetre out of his cellar. As owner of a grist-mill, a sawmill, and of stores in Andover and Methuen, he received a

large income. To his business ability were added qualities of statesmanship. For fifteen years he was President of the State Senate, and for sixteen years Judge of the Essex Court of Common Pleas. He was an Overseer of Harvard College for twenty years, and the year before his death was elected Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts. He won his greatest distinction, however, as one of the founders of Phillips Andover Academy, which received more than one hundred thousand dollars from different members of his family. By his influence, his uncle, John Phillips of Exeter, gave liberally to its foundation, and at the same time founded a similar academy at Exeter.

The religious spirit of his fathers was strong in Judge Phillips and the ruling motive of his life. With a profound sense of his responsibility to God, he aimed to

## 24 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

apply his wealth to the highest and noblest ends. His sudden death in 1802, at the age of fifty, however, left his long cherished plans incomplete. His wife, Phœbe Foxcroft, showed both strength of character and ability when she established in 1808, with the aid of her son, the Andover Theological Seminary.

The son of Judge Phillips and Phœbe Foxcroft was John Phillips, the grandfather of John Cotton Brooks. After his graduation from Harvard College he studied law, but on account of ill health gave up its practice. As an orator he achieved distinction in public life. He was a member of the State Senate, and a Governor's Aid, but his part in the founding of the Andover Theological Seminary was considered the crowning achievement of his life. He married Lydia, the daughter of Nathaniel Gorham of Charles-



town, and another daughter married Peter Chardon Brooks of Medford. Thus John Phillips and Peter Chardon Brooks were brothers-in-law. It was at her uncle's Medford home that Mary Ann Phillips came from Andover to visit, and there she met her future husband, William Gray Brooks. They were the parents of John Cotton Brooks. Thus in 1833, after a period of a little more than two hundred years, the direct descendants of Rev. George Phillips, the first minister at Watertown, and his parishioner, Thomas Brooks, were joined together in marriage.

## CHAPTER II

### THE EARLY YEARS

OF the six sons of William Gray Brooks and his wife, Mary Ann Phillips, four entered the ministry of the Episcopal Church. John Cotton Brooks, the youngest, was born at 3 Rowe Street (now a part of Chauncy Street), Boston, August 29, 1849. On All Saints' Day of the same year his parents took him to St. Paul's Church, where he was baptized by the Rev. Dr. Vinton.

His father, according to the custom of the day, kept a diary, in which from the time of their birth he recorded many facts in the lives of his six sons. He tells us that John weighed nine pounds at birth, and walked at nineteen months. He gives us

the exact date of his inoculation and states that it took well. He records the diseases of his youth. Such trifling facts were absurd to relate, did they not show a devotion and interest which led the fond father to chronicle in later years more important facts, such as how his sons progressed, and when and where they began their life-work. Above all, such details tell us of parental love and pride, and afford us a glimpse of the close relationship which existed in the Brooks' household.

At the age of six John was sent to a private school kept by Miss Capen. As a boy he was very shy, and on his first day at school he remained under the table and refused to come out, — this was jokingly referred to in after years by his brothers as an instance of his youthful modesty. It must be left for the reader to determine whether his presence at a school

## 28 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

exhibition, where his father found him sitting on the front settee, contentedly listening to the speaking, was due to the passing of his shyness, or to his early thirst for knowledge, for John had reached the age of nine.

The fact that four of the sons chose the ministry is evidence of the influence of their home training, both secular and religious. Family prayers were said twice a day, and on Sunday afternoons the Bible was read aloud and each son recited a hymn. The father kept in a little book a list of the hymns learned by the boys. John was very fond of being read to by his parents. In later years, with his own children about him, he read a story for an hour each night, and if some duty interrupted, they would eagerly await his return. His love for children was revealed in his fondness for juvenile books.

When Sunday came the Brooks family went regularly to church, and in after years John laid great emphasis upon the church as a home. "Take such a pew as you can always keep," he said one day to a woman who was selecting a pew; "it will become a church home that your children will always hold sacred after you have passed away." Then his mind wandered back to his youth, and he said that it seemed but yesterday since his own parents walked into St. Paul's Church, Boston, with his brothers and himself following them into the pew, where during their boyhood years they spent their Sunday mornings.

In 1839, ten years before John's birth, his parents began to go to St. Paul's Episcopal Church. For the six years preceding they had attended the First Church, which had been the charge of their ances-

## 30 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

tor, Rev. John Cotton, the first minister of Boston. The pastor at that time, the Rev. N. L. Frothingham, was a relative of Mr. Brooks.

As her family increased Mrs. Brooks became deeply solicitous about their religious training. The family traditions, and the efforts of her father and her grandmother, Phœbe Foxcroft, in the founding of the Andover Theological Seminary, made it difficult for her to identify herself permanently with the Unitarian church. Becoming dissatisfied, she looked about for another place of worship. At that time the rector of St. Paul's Church was the Rev. Dr. Stone, a representative low Churchman. To him Mrs. Brooks went for counsel and advice, and in 1839 she was confirmed in the Episcopal Church. When the Rev. Dr. Vinton, the foremost preacher in Boston of his day,

became rector a few years later, there began a pastoral relationship with the Brooks family that was to exert for many years a remarkable influence over the lives of its members. In 1847, Mr. Brooks, although at first indifferent to a change in his church life, through the influence of his wife and Doctor Vinton, was also confirmed. Thus the Brooks and the Phillips families returned to the Church which their ancestors had left over two centuries before.

John Cotton Brooks strongly resembled his mother, and from her he inherited a passion for righteousness and a devotion to duty which were the chief characteristics of his ministry. Physically he resembled her also, never robust nor strong, but with a highly organized nervous temperament which kept him working on, often when the frailty of the body forbade

## 32 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

it. His father was a practical man of affairs, — a strong character, interested in the topics of the day. A devoted husband and father, he gave of his means unsparingly for the education of his sons. He was patient and broad-minded, and possessing the confidence of his sons, he was always a wise counselor and a most interested helper.

Thus John Cotton Brooks inherited from his mother a desire to set the world aright, and a devotion to Christ, which made him a faithful shepherd of souls, while from his father came “a gift for the manifold detail of life,” and that practical interest in civic affairs that won for him in after years the name of “model citizen.” His mother’s traits and characteristics, however, predominated.

When his brothers grew up and left home for college, John, as the youngest



of the family, became the special object of his mother's watchfulness and care. He went with her on errands and to market, and theirs was a close companionship which developed in him a regard for parental authority and a love for home. In those early years he imbibed her love for God and the Church. To a parishioner he once said, when she worried over the future of her boys and wished that they might become better Churchmen, "Don't be discouraged, it will come in good time, the discipline of life will bring them to it. Your example will not be lost, for there is nothing lost in God's economy." Was he not thinking then of his mother's influence upon his own life?

As the early years passed, the older brothers left for college, and the family circle became smaller. At vacation times, however, when the boys came home,

## 34 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

there was plenty of fun, and none of his brothers had more humor than John. The holidays were times of special gaiety. Phillips Brooks wrote home one Thanksgiving Day, "What a stunner of a fowl. See John measuring it solemnly with his eye, and trying to make out whether he or it is the biggest. . . . Here comes the pudding. . . . Well, dinner's over and John's jacket just covers the small of his back." <sup>1</sup>

The years of the Civil War were passed by John in the pursuit of his studies and preparation for college. Too young to serve as a soldier, he invariably found some place in the crowds where he could stand and watch each regiment pass on to the scenes of battle. So strong, however, was his desire to take an active part, that

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Allen's Life of Phillip Brooks, Vol. I, p. 343.

he went one day to Mrs. Harrison Gray Otis, of the Committee on Military Donations, and asked her what he could do. The position of errand boy was offered to him and in that capacity he served faithfully. During these years came the first break in the family circle, caused by the death of his brother George from typhoid fever, while in the service of his country.

In the year 1867 John was graduated from the Latin School — this was also the year of his confirmation. In the fall he entered Harvard College without conditions with the Class of 1871. He studied hard, and as his health gave out he was obliged to obtain a leave of absence from college. He spent the next few months at a farm in Deerfield, Massachusetts, and while there his devotion to the Church was shown by his going several miles, lantern in hand, to the evening services of

## 36 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

the Episcopal Church in Greenfield. Ill health thus caused the loss of a year at college, and the following autumn he began again with the Class of 1872. At the end of his freshman year he stood ninth in his class. In those days class spirit at Harvard was different from what it is now, and it was harder to make the friendships which are so important to the college youth, when one had made a break with his class. But this did not prevent his making good progress in the social life, for he became a member of the "Institute of 1770," of which his great-grandfather was first president, and also of the "O. K.," and the Society of Christian Brethren. He was elected a member of the "Phi Beta Kappa," and in his sophomore year he received a *detur*.

The Churchmen of the College had formed the St. Paul's Society, of which

he was elected a president. His older brother, Phillips Brooks, then rector of Trinity Church, Boston, held a Bible class at Harvard, and often addressed the members of the Society. John is described by a classmate as being at this time "more reserved and less of a boy than his brother Phillips. He had the bearing of a man of thirty odd, gravely assimilating an education, rather than the reckless gaiety of the boy. He ripened early, but mellowed as he grew older." His ill health, and his diligence in his studies no doubt account for the air of seriousness and reserve and lack of interest in athletics, in which he took no part.

He was graduated in 1872, and when an opportunity to teach was given him, he accepted and became a tutor at St. Mark's School, Southborough, Massachusetts. Here again his health obliged him

## 38 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

to resign after a few months. He then went West and spent some months in the employ of the Lake Shore Railroad in the woods of Michigan.

His brothers were now well settled in various positions. William, the oldest, was prospering in business in Boston. Phillips was rector of Trinity Church, Boston. Arthur was rector of St. James Church, Chicago, and Frederick was fast rising to a position of eminence in the Church as rector of St. Paul's Church, Cleveland, Ohio. In 1872 Frederick went to Lowell to obtain a teacher for the recently established Brooks School at Cleveland. On returning to Boston, his train was delayed just before reaching the Boston & Lowell station. He was anxious to keep an appointment that evening, and started to walk across the drawbridge. It was a dark and stormy night.

He was near-sighted, and failing to see that the floor of the bridge had been removed for repairs, he fell through the bridge and was drowned. A week later his body was found in Boston harbor. His loss was greatly felt, for he was a man of exceptional promise, and had already made for himself a name in the Church as a preacher of marked ability and as a man endowed with the qualities of leadership.

With the example of his brothers, the family traditions, and his own home training, it seemed natural for John Brooks to enter the ministry. As a leader of the St. Paul's Society he had shown deep interest in religious matters at college, and the thought of entering the ministry had come to him, but he needed time to consider it. In the woods of Michigan he thought out the problem by himself. There he be-

## 40 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

came convinced that he would devote his life to the service of Jesus Christ. Determined to enter the Seminary at the beginning of the term, he walked many miles alone, in spite of the protests of the guide, through the Michigan woods, and traveled home to prepare himself for the work to which God had called him.

The Andover Theological Seminary offered at that time exceptional advantages to young men studying for the ministry. Although it was a Congregational school, it was thought that a year spent there would be a good foundation for the work to be continued elsewhere. The excellence of the course in Hebrew especially appealed to him. So John Brooks went to the Seminary founded by his grandfather to prepare himself for the Episcopal Church. The following two years after leaving Andover he spent at



the Philadelphia Divinity School, from which he was graduated in 1876.

At the end of his seminary course, a call coming to him from St. James Church, Bristol, Pennsylvania, he accepted it and was ordained as deacon, and later as priest by the Bishop of Pennsylvania, the Rt. Rev. William Bacon Stevens, D.D. His father has recorded that his salary consisted of fourteen hundred dollars and a rectory. Soon after his graduation he was married to Miss Harriette Hall Lovett of Boston, the daughter of Charles Walley Lovett and Josephine DeWolf Lovett. His daughter Josephine DeWolf was born at Bristol.

Here, by the banks of the Delaware, he worked hard, early and late, calling upon everybody interested in the Church. He awakened a new life in the parish and his sermons attracted many people to the

## 42 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

Church. In the midst of his work, he and his young bride having been attacked by malaria, their physician said that it was imperative for them to leave Bristol. This was a hard thing to do, for it was his first parish and he was happy and successful in his labors. The vestry accepted his resignation with much regret. He went from there to Providence, Rhode Island, to regain his health, and later took temporary charge of St. Gabriel's Church.

He was called to Christ Church, Springfield, Massachusetts, in the fall of 1878. His brother, Phillips Brooks, on hearing of his call, said, "Now John, go to Springfield. There is your life-work. You will be Brooks of Springfield."

## CHAPTER III

### THE BEGINNING OF THE SPRINGFIELD MINISTRY

WHEN John Cotton Brooks preached his first sermon in Springfield he was twenty-nine years of age, tall and thin, and with features which bore a striking resemblance to his ancestor, the Rev. John Cotton, the first minister of Boston. He entered the pulpit hurriedly and began to speak with eager and rapid utterance; his text was given out, and the sermon begun before the congregation had time to settle itself.

The youngest of the Brooks boys was now beginning his ministry over the largest Episcopal church in western Massachusetts. The reputation that his brothers

## 44 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

had already made in the Church was well known. It was natural that more would be expected of him than of another man. Influenced as he was by their example, his work, however, was accomplished according to his own ideals. Christ Church was to become under his charge the second largest Episcopal church in New England, as his brother Phillips' church in Boston, Trinity, was the largest.

The history of Christ Church up to this time was a comparatively brief one. About the year 1815, the Commandant of the United States Armory was Lieutenant-Colonel Roswell Lee. He was a devout Churchman, and by his influence a few families were gathered together in a room of one of the Armory buildings, where services were held. In a few years the congregation increased. A parish was organized and in 1821 a minister was called.

The Rev. Edward Rutledge, the first rector, left after a year's stay, remarking on leaving that his congregation, coming as it did from various parts of the country and also from different denominations, did not show much harmony of sentiment. Fourteen years later another attempt was made. The Rev. Samuel McBurney was sent as missionary, but not as rector. His attempt to establish the Church was unsuccessful.

In 1838 the Rev. Henry W. Lee came to Springfield, and held services in the Town Hall, at the corner of State and Market Streets. The next year the parish voted to erect a house of worship. A long subscription list shows how nobly the townspeople came to his support. Churchmen in Boston, Hartford, and Lowell made contributions. Five months later the corner-stone of the old church

## 46 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

on State Street was laid by the Rev. Titus Strong, D.D., of Greenfield, who had first ministered to the little flock in the Armory room. "It was an interesting occasion," said the young rector of twenty-four, thinking no doubt of his father's chapel in the Armory. Bishop Griswold consecrated the church on April 1, 1840. When Mr. Lee received a call from a church in Worcester, in submitting his offer to the vestry, it replied that it felt "that his labors and services would be of as much value to the great interests of religion in this tract of our Lord's Vineyard as they could be in Worcester." He declined the call. After a ministry of nine years he went as rector to St. Luke's Church, Rochester, New York, and later he was elected and consecrated Bishop of Iowa. He died in 1874. The Rev. Henry W. Adams succeeded Mr. Lee.

He was rector for eighteen months. His successor, the Rev. A. N. Littlejohn, after a year was called to St. Paul's Church, New Haven, Connecticut. He was later made Bishop of Long Island.

During the next two decades the parish increased in strength under the Rev. George H. McKnight (1851-1859) and the Rev. W. S. Child (1859-1869). When the Rev. Alexander Burgess became rector in 1869, the parish was in a prosperous condition, and a new church was built under his leadership. After purchasing the present site of Christ Church, a brown stone church was erected at a cost of seventy thousand dollars. The Rev. Mr. Burgess was elected Bishop of the Diocese of Quincy, Illinois, in 1878. Thus, in the short period of thirty years, three of the rectors of Christ Church had become bishops.

## 48 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

When Mr. Brooks became rector in December, 1878, the work before him was a difficult one. A parishioner who recalls those first years has said, "I became so inspired by his sermons and his courage in meeting the difficulties which he encountered on every side that I felt I must do all I could to help him, and as long as he lived there was such confidence between us that each one of his parishioners knew that he had only to ask any service and it would be given gladly."

There was a debt of forty thousand dollars upon the church building. The financial panic of the seventies had limited the resources of the parish, so that it was difficult to meet running expenses. Moreover the people were wearied with efforts at raising money. For four years Mr. Brooks worked against great odds. There



was no parish house, and the Sunday school was held in the old church, although the building was much out of repair. The surroundings of the new church were in marked contrast to their present condition, with a broken fence and an unroofed tower, the new tower, defective in construction, having been taken down. In those days the vestry-room and the choir-room were soaked through with each winter storm. It was a period of discouragement for the first four years. Mr. Brooks did little about the debt, and by 1882 it had increased to forty-three thousand dollars. Then he made his first appeal to his parishioners. The old church property was sold for fifteen thousand dollars, and Mr. Brooks raised fifteen thousand dollars more. Thus thirty thousand dollars of the debt was paid. In 1895 the debt had increased

## 50 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

to twenty-five thousand dollars, but that year it was reduced seven thousand dollars. In 1899 a final appeal was made and the debt was extinguished.

These figures represent a great amount of labor. During the first ten years of Mr. Brooks' ministry the parish house was built at a cost of fourteen thousand dollars. It was characteristic of Mr. Brooks, while subscriptions were being solicited for the parish house, to turn from that work and give his attention to the raising of money for the purchase of the land adjoining the church for a park, as it was proposed to erect buildings on the land which would seriously injure the property of the church. Five thousand dollars was given by the members of Christ Church. In this way Mr. Brooks helped towards the amount necessary to obtain the present public park, where



CHRIST CHURCH



THE PARISH HOUSE



## SPRINGFIELD MINISTRY 51

Saint Gaudens' statue of that sturdy old Puritan, Deacon Samuel Chapin, stands with his back turned to the Episcopal church, — the church from which he had departed to establish another in New England.

The increasing burdens of parish work now made necessary the services of an assistant minister. By an increase of one thousand dollars in the pew rentals the salary was provided, and in 1886 the Rev. Daniel Dulany Addison was called. On his acceptance of the call Mr. Brooks wrote him the following note:

CHRIST CHURCH RECTORY,

April 1st, 1886.

DEAR MR. ADDISON: — I must write one word to tell you of the great joy that your telegram has brought into the Rectory just as I am leaving for the funeral at Chicopee.

How delightful and bright my future work looks

## 52 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

in having you with me. God has mercifully guided us both in all this. That He may bless and sanctify us for his service in all our work is the constant prayer through these days of

Your affectionate brother,

J. C. BROOKS.

In raising money for the church, Mr. Brooks seldom, if ever, went to a few rich individuals. He appealed to all, both rich and poor alike. "The welfare of our loved Mother, our Church," were his words when he made his final appeal. The money would come in small sums; the working girl and the poor man gave what they could, influenced by the spirit Mr. Brooks had instilled into their hearts. A few dollars would be left at the rectory door with a note expressive of the loving heart back of the gift. One who heard the last appeal has said: "His heroic efforts to help in paying off the debt of Christ

Church culminated in that powerful address from the chancel. He used the most powerful imagery, when he saw the departed spirits, as it were, of those who had sacrificed much in the past, walking down the aisle. It was stirring and telling, and showed him a master of eloquent pleading for the welfare of Christ Church."

This account of the financial condition of Christ Church is interesting, as it affords us an insight into the material difficulties that burdened nearly all the years of his ministry, but particularly the first years. It tells us why it was so necessary to centralize his efforts on Christ Church. It tells us why his ministry was an intensive one. To the building up of Christ Church he devoted his life. He subordinated everything else to that. As his own bishop said, "I have never known any

## 54 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

clergyman who gave himself so completely and intensely to a parish.”

During the summer of 1880 Mr. Brooks traveled abroad with his brother Phillips. While in England he preached from the pulpit of his ancestor, the Rev. John Cotton, in old St. Botolph's Church. While in Scotland, Phillips Brooks wrote a letter home to his brother, of which the following is an extract.<sup>1</sup>

DEAR ARTHUR: — Here are John and I, way up in the Highlands, with everything redolent of heather and broom and gillies and pibrochs and burns and tarns and the “Princess of Thule,” and that sort of thing. . . . In London everything was very pleasant. Stanley was very devoted, and put us in the way of seeing lots of pleasant sights and people. I preached for him in the Abbey on the Fourth of July, and was quite shamed with the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Allen's Life of Phillips Brooks, Vol. II, p. 272.



## SPRINGFIELD MINISTRY 55

way in which Farrar in the afternoon outsaid everything that I possibly could have said about America. Then I went down to Windsor and preached. . . . Last Sunday we spent in Edinburgh and heard their great man there, a certain Dr. MacGregor. . . . John spent at Boston the Sunday which I spent at Windsor, and preached in old St. Botolph's there."

The early years of his ministry in Springfield were saddened by the death of his mother, and of his second child, who had been named after her grandmother, Mary Ann Phillips. At this time his brother Phillips wrote:

December 2, 1880.

DEAR JOHNNY:—I hope that you will feel like coming down on Monday. I am sure that it will do you good; you know what a simple, quiet time it is. All the fellows will be glad to see you, and you know what a treat it will be to me.

I have been thinking of you all the time, and hoping that you were happy, and that everything

## 56 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

was going well with you and H——. The Sundays must have been hard enough, and yet I know the work has helped you. I am sure it is a blessing to a minister that the work to which he has to go when he is in sorrow is not a foreign thing which vexes and chafes him, but he is busied with the thoughts which he needs most, and which bring him into the presence of God where he most wants to be.

I am so glad that I was with you those two days, and that I had part in choosing the pleasant spot where the body of your little child and my god-child was to be laid. I shall always be thankful for it. How beautiful it must be out there this bright winter morning.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Allen's Life of Phillips Brooks, Vol. II, p. 274.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE GROWTH OF THE PARISH

ONE day in his early ministry as Mr. Brooks was making parish calls, another minister sat beside him in a horse-car and remarked that the burden of a large parish must be great. To this Mr. Brooks replied, "It is all practicable for the man who does not take up too much outside work." Throughout his ministry in Springfield he lived up to the thought expressed that day. For this reason he did not give the Bohlen Lectures, when invited to do so in 1902. He refused invitations so constantly to preach elsewhere that his friends in Boston said, "He was always on the point of catching a train for Springfield." His brother,

## 58 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

Phillips Brooks, used to say of him, "John is a great parish priest."

His methods of work were along the same lines throughout the whole of his ministry. In the beginning he revised the parish lists. He endeavored to account for every name associated with the church; he divided the parish into sections, and found those who would help in the work of calling. He always carried in his pocket a book with the names and addresses of every family and individual, and he revised this list at least once a year. When he produced a fresh list of his parishioners one day, he remarked, "My assistant brought this to me saying it is all done, and I said, 'Yes, to-morrow they 'll begin to move.' "

Sunday mornings and evenings, if strangers happened into the church, he always met them. Sometimes a visitor

would remark, "I always try to get back here on Sunday, so as to get your welcome." Actors and actresses frequently came, appreciating his greeting. Occasionally a letter from a distance would be received, beginning, "You don't know me, but I feel I know you, for I never shall forget that hand-shake you gave me one night in your church." This custom, which he practiced for years, aided remarkably in the growth of the parish. With pencil and note-book in hand he obtained the new names and addresses, and the following week, he, or his assistant, would make the first call. If possible, he made the first call himself. Before the beginning of each service he went about the church from pew to pew, seeking these new-comers. He did not meet them at the church door. "There would be weeks at a time," said one of

his parishioners, "when he would pass my pew without looking my way, intent upon the stranger who was in danger of getting out of his reach. Then he would meet me with both hands outstretched, and a cordial greeting which showed that his mind was free for old friends, but at all times I knew that I could call upon him if I needed him." The results of this personal work added many new families and individuals to the parish every year.

"I will find a niche for you here, somewhere in the church," he said to one who had recently come to the city. From that moment the man felt at home. "I came to the city a complete stranger," said another man, "and was not an Episcopalian (though for some time gravitating in that direction), and I shall never forget also that when I was a candidate

for confirmation, he, and this shows his breadth of view, asked for and received my letter of dismissal from a Congregational church, treating it with Christian courtesy." The words of another will show his helpfulness to one on coming into the Episcopal Church: "Under his wise and sympathetic guidance I took the step which severed my connection with the denomination in which I was born, and came into the Church where I have found my real home. It was for me a great wrench, and I shall never forget the gentle, wise, and patient helpfulness of my dear friend and rector, never hurrying or urging me until the time came when it was right and best." These words express his manner of dealing with a delicate question. He did not urge any one to attend his church unless he felt that he had a perfect right to do so.

## 62 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

He never forgot that in every call there was a purpose. He impressed this fact upon his assistants, and also that the value of a call is not in its length. In a large parish there must be economy in regard to time. New families are to be called upon and unbaptized children are to be looked after, — “no man could impress upon a mother the importance of baptism as he could,” said one of his assistants. At Easter and Christmas it was no unusual sight to see from fifteen to twenty baptisms at one service. He was particular about sponsors, and was willing to accept the sponsorship himself.

To his assistant he gave the work of calling upon delinquent Sunday school children. Every child absent for three Sundays had to be called upon, and the reason of their absence discovered. By



consistent and continued calling people became interested in the church, and learned to realize that the church needed them. Mr. Brooks would quickly retire from a house when he found on calling that the family were attendants elsewhere. He respected the domain of other churches, and if he erred it was from ignorance of the situation. When people showed an inclination towards the church, he was always ready to meet them.

The Bishop visited Christ Church for confirmation once a year, always on a Sunday morning. Three months before the time for confirmation a systematic interviewing of certain people was begun, and from time to time Mr. Brooks put down in a book kept for the purpose the names of persons who were possible candidates. The classes were invariably large, — in the last ten years numbering

from forty-five to seventy-four. No one who attended these services during Mr. Brooks' ministry would soon forget them. To sit in one's pew and see so many men and women arising from their seats in different parts of the church and going forward to the chancel was inspiring. Mr. Brooks considered sixteen years of age early enough for confirmation. He had an intimate acquaintance with each member of his confirmation classes, and his lectures were well attended. After their confirmation many people attended these lectures in subsequent years, for in these talks they said he was often at his best. He visited those who were not able to attend the lectures, or he had them come to the rectory study for instruction. He never waited for people to speak to him about confirmation. He rarely wrote a letter on the subject,

preferring a personal talk. During a pastoral call, a chance meeting at some social occasion, or elsewhere, a mere word dropped by chance would prompt Mr. Brooks on returning home to jot down a name in his little book of possible candidates for confirmation, and months later this was used to bring up the subject. At the end of his first ten years in Christ Church, four hundred and seventy-five souls had been confirmed. The communicants numbered six hundred and forty-three.

In all his work Mr. Brooks was searching for the individual soul. Pastoral work means sacred and confidential relationships; by its nature it oftentimes lies unrecognized and hidden in a large parish, and yet this is the work that counts. It made Mr. Brooks a real power, not only in his own parish, but

also in the city of Springfield. People knew that he was a faithful pastor; they respected his care for the needy, and the cheer he gave to the sorrowing and afflicted. One summer a person interested in a certain worthy family came to see him about sending them away for the summer months. The mother was ill and needed rest, while the father had been unable to find employment. It was suggested that if he could go with his family he might find employment in the country, and not return to require further aid from the parish. "But," said Mr. Brooks with warmth, "we want them to come back, they are just the kind of people we want in our church." Later that family no longer needed aid.

Of the limits of his parish he was ever watchful. No person lived too far away to receive a call from him. Some of the

most constant attendants lived farthest from the church. He was careful about absenting himself from the parish, lest perchance he might be needed. How he kept up this work year in and year out was a puzzle to many. It was devotion, — the devoted spirit of the man. A minister who knew him well, said, that after making a friendly call upon Mr. Brooks he came away feeling humbled and inspired from listening to his talk of parish work. Another said that his work was always in the essentials, with no waste on the mere machinery. To him, the best method was personal relationship.

Instances of his helpfulness could be shown in various ways. They all show how the growth of the parish was helped. During the early days of his ministry, a certain church family, living at a distance, had permitted their children to attend

## 68 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

another Sunday school. During an epidemic of diphtheria, before anti-toxin days, several of the family were stricken with the disease. No nurse could be found. The neighbors were afraid to venture near. The only person beside the physician who entered the house was Mr. Brooks. Although he had children of his own, he was most faithful in his visits and aid, and when they recovered, the distance to Christ Church was not too great for them to attend.

He was ever on the alert to help those in sickness or distress, and he was prompt to relieve. He would consult a doctor at once, procure a nurse and buy medicines, or he would assume the responsibility himself, if necessary in some cases, and take a child or adult direct to the hospital. Nothing was too trivial to escape his attention if it would aid the suffering.

It was his genius for detail, expressed in what he felt was the Master's work.

The same spirit of helpfulness was shown in his relations with young men. He invited them to his study and talked over their aims and ambitions. He found money to help some to go to college, and while at college he made it his own business to help others to employment. One whom he helped has written, "He was of great assistance to me. When I left the Springfield High School I applied for a position. Among my references I gave the name of Mr. Brooks. The firm decided that I could not have the position because of my handwriting, which was then very poor. When I told Mr. Brooks of this, he called at the place, and promised on my behalf, although I knew nothing about it, that if they would give me a trial, he would see that I took writing

lessons in the Springfield Business School. As a result of the efforts of Mr. Brooks I obtained the position. Without his assistance I know that I would not have had the opportunity." He went from store to store sometimes, seeking a position for one of his parishioners.

In these practical ways throughout his ministry he aided many people, and as the years went by many of them prospered, and by their loyalty to the church and their respect for him they made it possible for him to help others as he had helped them. His parishioners never failed to give him their loyal and liberal support when money or other means were needed in any work he undertook for the welfare of others. They knew that he was wise in his judgment, and instead of eliciting criticism, he inspired them with confidence.



Thus he became a refuge for many a man and many a woman when in trouble or distress. "Unconsciously he became my pattern, for if he could bear the anxieties and sorrows of life, he must be sustained by some power which I must gain to help me in my despair. No wonder I became a faithful attendant upon the church services, when I depended upon them for comfort," were the words of one of the many who recognized the spiritual power which was in John Brooks.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SUCCESS OF THE SOCIETIES

THE building of the parish house proved to be a wise move on the part of Mr. Brooks. It became the center of the parish activities, and was admirably fitted for the work of the church organizations. On the first floor was a capacious room, readily divided by glass partitions into smaller rooms, in which a fireplace added an atmosphere of hospitality. Here the various societies met, — the Girls' Friendly Society, the Woman's Auxiliary, and Junior Branch, the Mother's Club, the Men's Club, the Young Communicant's Society, the Parish Aid, and other organizations from time to time. Above was the chapel, where the Sunday school

met each Sunday, and where all the early communion services were held. A well-furnished chancel, a pipe-organ, and memorial windows by LaFarge made the chapel a place of worship exceptional in the quality of its furnishings, while the memorial windows made it an object of pride to the people of the parish. In these things Mr. Brooks showed his artistic taste, as he did in later years, when by the approval of the donors he planned the subjects for five memorial windows in the chancel of the church.

It was in this parish house that the first convention of the new Diocese of Western Massachusetts was held, and here the first bishop, the Rt. Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, D. D., was elected. Here also the hospitality of Christ Church was shown to the ministers of other churches as they each month assembled as the

Ministers' Association of the City of Springfield.

After Mr. Brooks' death every society claimed that it was his special favorite, thus showing that the members of each organization considered their society a successful one. The success of these societies was due to three facts, — first, the careful selection of leaders in the work, second, Mr. Brooks' knowledge of the details of the work of each organization, and third, his ability to impart to others his own enthusiasm and spirit, and a sense of their individual responsibility.

Mr. Brooks was one of the first to recognize the value of the Girls' Friendly Society, and to form a branch in Massachusetts, which from its inception in Christ Church, July 3, 1888, proved a success. Young women, not only of the parish but also of other churches, were

eligible to membership, and in a few years the enrollment was over a hundred. In this society might be found on Tuesday evenings during the winter months classes pursuing work of various kinds, such as basket-making, millinery, and cooking, and study on current events, literature, and travel. One evening a month was observed as a social meeting. Mr. Brooks always kept a part of Tuesday evening free, in order to attend the meetings of the society, and the members appreciated his interest in them. "How could we help it?" said one of the members. "At our socials he was ever ready to tell stories at a moment's notice. I recall in particular a ghost story which he told at one of our Hallowe'en parties, and it was thoroughly appreciated by all."

While spending his vacation at Andover one summer, he was invited by the

rector of Christ Church of that town to his summer home at Boxford. The Rev. Mr. Palmer tells the following incident: "I had invited the Girls' Friendly Society of my parish to Boxford, and also Mr. Brooks, to take tea with us. After tea some of the girls came to me and said that they were desirous to have Mr. Brooks tell them something about his brother, the late Bishop. When I carried the request, he refused. He said that there was nothing to be said in public, which the public did not already know. But when I urged, he finally consented to say just a few words. We had meantime gone into the dining-room of the old house, with its low, beam-crossed ceiling and large fireplace. The girls sat on the floor while he stood in front of the fire and began to tell us about the life of the home, where he and his brother were

children. Soon he became rapid: — and for nearly an hour he went on, recalling incidents of that early life in Boston, which was so like my own there that I could see again the center-table of an evening with its astral lamp, and the father reading aloud, while mother and the children sat looking and listening. The big fire threw flickering lights about the otherwise unlighted room. The girls sat rapt in attention, with hardly a rustle. His tall figure, his earnestness, his quick utterance, his face strongly lighted on one side and thrown into shadow on the other, — it all stamped itself on my mind, and has remained as a clear-cut picture. No one can interpret the personality of another without revealing his own, and in the description of Phillips Brooks we saw John Brooks.”

It was this ability to adapt himself to

various occasions and his ease of manner at such times that always made his personality felt, whether in the business or the social meetings of the parish. When a visiting member of the Girls' Friendly Society was suddenly taken ill, he became at once "a help and benefactor." A letter came soon after from a member of the visiting society saying, "I do not wonder at the success of your branch with such a chaplain and rector. I was charmed with him all the evening, until his tenderness with poor Ruth capped the climax, and made me for always his ardent admirer." She called the conference most successful, and said, "Christ Church people have a genius for conferences."

When the admission services to the Girls' Friendly Society were held, his aim was to make them impressive and helpful, and he talked to the girls as if



they were his own children. It was then that many have said he was of the most assistance to them. He seemed to see the world as it looked to the schoolgirl, the girl at home, and the girl at work. At other times he would be ready with some suggestion for better carrying out the Society's motto, "Bear ye one another's burdens." He helped every girl that needed help, and when one was ill he provided a bed at the hospital, if necessary, and made sure that she was well cared for; he noticed the careworn and tired faces of those who needed a vacation, and made it possible for them to go away during the summer months.

One who was active in the Society for years comments upon his efforts to make it a success: "He would come to see me and always give me something to do. To call on this one and to ask that one to

attend the Monday afternoon society. And when next we met, he would remember to ask about these people. I used to be astonished to know that he held so many details in his mind. He told me that he had very little time to call upon the regular attendants at church. He said that he needed to devote himself to the new-comers, and those who could not or did not attend church regularly, and that he thought of each member of the church in their relation to others, and what he might do to help them. So when he came to see me, I knew that he had something for me to do. The Society was very dear to him, and if possible he was present at some time in the evening. I have heard him say that he was proud of being the only man allowed to be a member. The girls always felt that a meeting was more enjoyable for his presence."

An instance of how he encouraged others, and planned during the summer for the winter work is shown by this quotation: "I am exceeding glad to think about the Girls' Friendly Society, as your welcome letter calls me to do. I like your circular about the conferences in all respects and have nothing to alter or add. It is full and explicit—but has not Northampton a right to be included in the list of parishes having Branches? And now send it out early, and do not be discouraged if but a very small proportion of parishes respond cordially, for it is the first approach, and I shall count on a few earnest and devout women, enough to hope for now—am looking forward to all the privileges of the winter work. I shall be back Sept. 3rd. Have many plans to tell you."

He became so interested in the work

of each society, that when the leaders or members came to him they were always sure to find a ready listener to all matters pertaining to their work, and the hearty support he gave to each one made it the most natural thing to appeal to him. "I felt that he left me alone almost too much," said one of the leading workers. "I always had to go to him, but when I sat down in the study for a talk he always made me feel that there was no work in the world so well worth the doing as this work. And that a little part of that work was for me to do. He gave me fresh inspiration."

He selected the leaders for different organizations with great care. Once he asked a certain person to undertake a particular work for which he felt that she was especially fitted. "I never shall forget," she said, "what a real help he

was to me. I used to go to the rectory study with correspondence which troubled me, — questions which worried me,— and never was he too tired or busy to hear and counsel. I do not think I would have had the courage to undertake or the perseverance to continue during those years if it had not been for him. I remember how he used to lift me out of the nervous depression following those first public meetings, when it seemed sometimes as though I could never face another, and even inspire me with a faint reflection of his own indomitable courage. He always seemed to grasp quickly the highest significance of things; he rose to the occasion invariably, and in times of special need we were never disappointed.” From another comes the same note of his ability to inspire others, “I would go from his study walking on air, feeling that there

was not anything I might not accomplish of God's work for me." He tried to make others realize that it was their individual work that counted, and he did not fail to let such people know that their efforts were appreciated.

On Wednesdays for a number of years a company of forty or more women would assemble at the parish house. This was called the Mother's Meeting, — practical talks were given each week, sometimes a short business meeting was held, and afterward there was a social tea. Mr. Brooks usually appeared towards the end of the afternoon. One might think that this gathering of women, representing the different families of the parish, came together as a matter of course. It is easy for an outsider to get the idea that church organizations grow without particular effort. Those who have attended

church for years on Sunday mornings, and have heard the notices given out for the various meetings of the week, often think that that is enough to bring people together. But church societies seldom grow in that way, — notices are evidences of their existence, and that is all. People who come from different parts of a city, who are unlikely to meet in their own neighborhood circles, must be drawn to the church by some personal influence; they must be invited again and again. For years Mr. Brooks and his assistant worked along this line, until one by one the meetings grew. Here, as well as in the other societies, were persons to be considered when confirmation came. Every year each society was represented in the confirmation class.

The influence of the missionary map on the wall of the nursery in his early

Boston home never ceased to be felt during his life. He had the true missionary spirit, and instilled it into the missionary societies of the church. "He was always interested," said a member of the Woman's Auxiliary, "always inspiring, always lifting things to a higher plane of thought, — a higher level of service. He would throw a society on its own resources, ever desirous that the members should be aware of his unchanging interest." To another member he said one day, "Don't let them think that Mr. Brooks is all absorbed in the new things. Tell them I am just as interested as ever, though I am not always able to attend the meetings." How well he succeeded from year to year in work for missions is evidenced by the quality and quantity of materials that were sent away, and by the money that was raised. It is not too much to



say that few ministers have had a more loyal and indefatigable band of workers in missionary work than he.

During the latter years of Mr. Brooks' ministry a Men's Club was formed, and at its meetings, which were attended sometimes by a hundred men from the parish, men of note addressed it. Among these were Richard H. Dana, Talcott Williams, Evarts Wendell, R. Fulton Cutting, and Charles S. Hamlin. While the work of the Club was carried on by the members, Mr. Brooks was always much interested in procuring the speakers.

Mr. Brooks gave such loyal support to his assistants that it was a delight to work with him, and because of his appreciation of every honest effort, and his own example and optimism, they were spurred on to better work. It was a work together, and not in different direc-

tions. Every morning he met his assistant and talked over with him the plans for the afternoon, as well as the work of the preceding day. What one had experienced, the other learned; there was none of the superior's air about Mr. Brooks in these interviews; his frank criticisms and words of encouragement were helpful and often inspiring. Following the Rev. Daniel Dulany Addison, his first assistant, came the Rev. Newton Black, the Rev. William E. Hayes, the Rev. Edward L. Atkinson, the Rev. James DeW. Perry, Jr., the Rev. James C. Sharp, the Rev. Edmund J. Cleveland, and the Rev. Donald N. Alexander.

Mr. Brooks always kept in the closest touch with the Sunday school organization. In later years he seldom taught a class himself, but devoted some of his time to hearing the catechism, class

by class. Every Monday morning he went over the class lists of the Sunday school, learning thus the names of every scholar and interesting himself in their progress from year to year. When it came time for confirmation, he would often consult the teachers in the day schools as well as the parents. In connection with the Sunday school, the interest which he took at Easter and Christmas in the music was shown by his efforts to procure the best of carols. One of his unique methods to obtain these was to write to his clerical friends, asking for a copy of the carol which was his Sunday school's favorite. In that way he obtained the best from other churches.

After returning from his summer vacation one year he was met by his new assistant, who declared that he did n't know what was going to be done about

the Sunday school, as more than half of the thirty teachers had signified their intention not to come back. Mr. Brooks was amazed at this, and when he asked the assistant what he had done, was answered, "I thought I would find out if they were intending to return, so I wrote to each of them a letter." "No wonder you are discouraged," said Mr. Brooks, "you have made them suspect that they are not wanted by your letters." The next week Mr. Brooks called upon each one personally and explained the error of his new assistant. They all returned.

## CHAPTER VI

### TRAITS THAT HELPED

ONE September evening Mr. Brooks stood upon the rectory steps, saying good-by to a parishioner who had called to obtain a letter of introduction to the rector of another parish. "At this time of the year," said Mr. Brooks, "I too receive letters from other clergymen, saying, — 'Dear brother, the star of my parish has set.'" Then, with a whimsical smile he turned, and presenting a letter that he had just written, jokingly said, "I copied one of those."

He was a man of rare humor and wit, and it was a blending of humor and tenderness that sweetened his friendships.

## 92 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

Some, who regarded him only as a most faithful and devoted minister, could have had no suspicion of this trait, for in no sermon or public address did he ever introduce a touch of it: in them he spoke with the deep earnestness which he thought the pressing things of God's Kingdom required. But those who knew him as a man learned to appreciate with delight his rich vein of wit and humor. To a friend who had known him from college days, "he bubbled over with bright remarks, seeing the attractive and droll side of events and people, without one suspicion of malice. It was a joy to sit with him for hours and enjoy his point of view, so pat and illuminating when our own was prosaic." A clergyman, an old college friend, said of him, "I remember on a visit to preach for me how our children, usually shy of a visiting parson, and



### THE RECTORY

(Formerly the home of George Bliss, and the finest house in Springfield, built in 1824, and in 1873 moved from the present site of Christ Church to this site, on which it was demolished in 1907.)





deeming his coming somewhat of an affliction, were eager to sit in the study and hear John talk. To this day my daughter remembers the joy and laughter of that visit."

His sense of humor was never studied or for effect; it was natural and spontaneous. He did not try to preserve stories for particular occasions, but always had one that was *a propos* when the time came. He passed easily from the lighter to the more serious side of things, and was always ready to treat serious matters seriously, — no one more so than he. By his sense of humor, he would in a light, but merciless, manner, ridicule sham and sentimentality, for which he had no sympathy. To tell how this trait entered into all the relationships of his daily life would be to reveal how he won the lifelong friendships of his people; how they learned to know him

and love him as a man; how he helped and comforted them in the sorrows and anxieties of life. He who possessed such a keen knowledge of care and trouble likewise had a keen sense of joy and humor. Like Abraham Lincoln, a hearty laugh would rest him and relieve the strain. It refreshed John Brooks amid the cares of his own life, and enabled him to bring to others a courage and an optimism that often seemed impossible.

“How much he enjoyed my eightieth birthday, when he came with others to celebrate it,” said one of his parishioners, “and when Dr. Tomkins was here, Mr. Brooks introduced me as belonging to his infant class.” It was a rare nature that could joke in such a light manner, and yet be for years a respected and honored spiritual guide.

“I love to remember him at the Christ-

mas tree exercises,” said one who grew up in the parish, and had attended them for years. “His jocularities and wit always captivated the children, and grown-up people as well. He entered so heartily into the evening’s fun. No one laughed with more glee than he, and no one had a better time.” The next moment on such occasions he might be found interviewing some boys who had invited themselves to the festivities, regardless of their non-union with the Sunday school of Christ Church, or he might be found lecturing a disorderly boy who knew in his heart that he deserved the correction. Then he was stern. There was little humor at such times. His strong sense of what was right, and his high idea of what right conduct should be in Sunday school and choir, made many a youth fear him at times. But they would always find in him a friend.

In after years they realized that he had acted for their best good and interests, stern and unjust though they may have thought him at the time.

He said one day to a small boy as he stood beside his mother at a church picnic, "Well, — I suppose I have got you to bring up, but after bringing up your father it looks like a hard job"; and then said the mother, "He was so funny with his witty remarks that every one was convulsed with laughter." The two traits that struck the mother who related the story were his keen wit, and his fatherly tenderness when one was in trouble. "I shall never forget," she said, "how he came here a sick man himself, when my mother lay dying, and how he talked to me. One sentence stands out clearly. 'The same Jesus I have told you about will help you to bear this.' " Thus, those

who knew the man saw how transparent and frank were his motives and how lovable his nature.

One summer while spending his vacation in Maine, he stopped for a few days at a boarding-house. A young couple recently married was present at the table. Mr. Brooks kept the company in good spirits, and when the young couple was about to leave, the young man said to Miss Brooks, "You don't know what it has been to me to meet your father. It has been a perfect revelation to see what a minister can be. Ever since I was a boy I have been frightened to death of them. I have felt that they could have nothing in common with me."

It was this trait that made his companionship a delight, and in his home it enriched the spirit of his hospitality. To sit at his table after a Sunday morning

## 98 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

service was to find him not self-conscious, and ill at ease, thinking over his work of the morning, — he would dismiss all that and his witticisms would come forth, making the hour a most joyous one. One day he invited a young man, who was a stranger in the city, to dine with him. With embarrassment he accepted, expecting a rather somber and dreary visit. When at table Mr. Brooks began a humorous story, a relief came to his embarrassment, and he had an exceedingly enjoyable time. To this young man Mr. Brooks became a help in finding a way for him to enter college. His friendship began that day at dinner.

With his love of fun and buoyancy of spirits one could discern that he was a man of much nicety of feeling, of high instincts. Nothing aroused him to protest more quickly than some low or base

standard. In everything he was the high-minded Christian man.

Another of his characteristics was his love for children. He saw to it himself that every detail for the Christmas entertainments was carried out to the letter. Each year he sent a little letter to some two hundred children in the parish asking them to attend the special Christmas entertainment provided for the kindergarten department of the Sunday school. The following is one of them :

MY DEAR EUNICE:— Christmas is coming next Thursday, and Santa Claus says he is coming to the Parish House on Saturday the 27th, at two o'clock, with lots of presents for all the little girls and boys of our Church. So I want you and your mama surely to come, and have a Christmas party with him just as you did last year.

I shall look for a little letter telling me that you will come, and I hope that you can, for we will all have a real nice time, and I will be awfully dis-

## 100 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

appointed if you don't come. With a Merry  
Christmas and a Happy New Year,

I am, Your loving friend,

JOHN COTTON BROOKS.

The replies to these letters Mr. Brooks treasured and put carefully away. Each one he would read himself, thus showing his delight in the joy of the child. So in their earliest years the children of his parish learned to know that he was a joyous man, as well as a faithful minister. It was one way of teaching them the idea he preached upon and talked about as he went from family to family in his pastoral calls, — that is, the church as a home, the parish as a family. “In my great big family of Christ Church,” he wrote in a letter one year to the children.



## CHAPTER VII

### BEYOND THE PARISH

JOHN COTTON BROOKS was more than a parish priest. As Archdeacon, and Dean of the Convocation of Springfield, as President of the Union Relief Association, and President of the Ministers' Association of the City of Springfield, as one of the founders of the Springfield Hospital, and in various charitable institutions of the city he proved himself able and efficient. He gave himself without stint to the city as well as to his parish.

As Archdeacon he was untiring in his efforts to promote the interests of the Church in Western Massachusetts.

## 102 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

“Nothing kept him back, nothing was to him impossible. As like nothing so much as a great wheel-horse to some diligence on an Alpine road. It was up-hill strain and struggle, with tense nerve, with masterful perseverance and resolution coming at last to the top of the difficult pass.” In this manner spoke one who was associated with him for years, — the Rev. William Wilberforce Newton, D.D., then rector of St. Stephens Church, Pittsfield. Mr. Brooks became for a time a rural missionary, traveling over the Berkshire country and exploring the needs and possibilities of the Church. At Williamstown he aided the church committee in making a strong parish out of a struggling mission. A church was built and a rector called. He went to Mt. Holyoke College to conduct services, and to administer Holy Communion to

the Episcopalians, and as a result of his visits a number of the students came to Springfield and were confirmed at Christ Church. As they were not able to attend the evening confirmation lectures, they went to the rectory study to receive instruction. To one girl he wrote, "This is a Congregational school, but give of your very best, and especially do not absent yourself from Communion." When he preached there during one of his last visits on the subject, "Harmony and peace with activity and work," it expressed what his own life had been.

In the Convocation meetings of the Diocese Mr. Brooks is described as the life of the meetings. "He was enthusiastic about the Convocation of the western part of the state, and how many conferences he and I have had," said Dr. Lawrence of Stockbridge. "He brought

into the meetings," said another, "his enthusiasm, and light-heartedness, and would pass on the contagion until everybody was in the best of spirits. He never seemed to think that religious matters as such called for the long face and tired expression." His genius for details was shown by the study he gave to the religious statistics and geography of the western part of Massachusetts, for none could talk more intelligently about the conditions in the remote towns of the Diocese than he. Some years later he preached before the clergy at All Saints Church, Worcester, and those who heard him were impressed with his detailed knowledge of the Diocese. It was more than a mere collection of data from prepared statistics, for it showed that he had been over the country, studied its possibilities, observed the weakness and fail-

ure of other churches, and had studied their causes. He made an eager plea for the Church to carry the Gospel to these people. With a reverence for the soil of his native state he recognized the part that missions played in determining the character of the commonwealth. In regard to diocesan missions he once said, "When we go on to remember whose presence has filled these fair regions, whose holy lives were lived in them, and whose graves yet hallow them in every ancient graveyard in country and city, we feel more intensely still the need of hastening to cleanse and preserve our beautiful state as a fit legacy to bequeath to the future."

After the death of Bishop Brooks in 1893 the question of the division of the Diocese of Massachusetts arose, for the impression prevailed that the burden

of the administration was too great for one man. A committee was appointed by the Diocesan Convention to report upon the question of this division. But ancient and beloved associations were strong. The way did not seem clear to accomplish it, and the question rested until 1900. Mr. Brooks, during these years, as a Massachusetts man, was frank to confess, as did his Bishop, that he did not want the Church in Massachusetts to be divided. Yet he recognized the necessity for division, and gave his hearty support to the cause. He was appointed a member of a committee consisting of the Rector of Trinity Church, Boston, Dr. E. Winchester Donald, the Rev. William B. Frisby from the Church of the Advent, Boston, and Dr. Arthur Lawrence of Stockbridge, and the following laymen, Messrs. Bent, Choate, Paine,

and Saunders, to consider the detailed plan of the division of the Diocese. Mr. Brooks' part in the division of the Diocese was a conspicuous one. After the organization of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts he was elected president of the Standing Committee, an office which he held until his death.

Mr. Brooks was often a presiding officer, and as such he knew the work down to the minutest details, the intricate questions of debate that frequently call for a presiding officer's ruling never confusing him. "His mind was as clear as a bell on the questions at issue. There was a constructive and orderly aspect of his mind that always revealed itself when necessary," said the Rev. Henry B. Washburn, Secretary of the Standing Committee. When he was put on a special committee to report, he returned

a report worthy of acceptance. His familiarity with the details and conditions of the Church in Western Massachusetts made his opinion valuable.

For some years Mr. Brooks was President of the Union Relief Association of Springfield, an organization which was one of the first of the kind to be established in Massachusetts for the purpose of systematizing the charitable work of a city and helping the ministers as well as private individuals by furnishing facts concerning persons who needed aid and support. It applied itself to the prevention of outdoor begging, and as a great deal of the work of the Overseers of the Poor was given into its hands, it eventually meant a saving to the city. It was a new departure for Springfield. Mr. Brooks became interested in it from the beginning, realizing that with so many churches



there was need for a central bureau of information. He saw in this association that united work was possible, and to its success he gave his best efforts, until it became a help to his parish. To his assistant he wrote one summer, pointing out the value of the Union Relief, "Be sure and consult the secretary, for she is invaluable in guarding you from impostors who endeavor to take advantage of a new man." The assistant was new, but a few weeks out of the theological school, and he certainly needed advice, for strange and unknown faces appeared at the rectory door continually. He wrote to the rector for advice, and received the following reply, "I see that your tramps are like all the rest, and you will find them less encouraging to aid than our resident people." The place for them was the Union Relief

Association. When the rector returned from his vacation the tramps ceased their visits. The new minister's methods had been tested. Thus the work of looking after strangers was greatly lightened. A large parish situated in the center of a city is bound to be a refuge for people of different kinds; some should be assisted by the Union Relief Association, and others should be taken care of by the church. The minister must use his judgment and discretion; in either case the minister notifies the Association, and the Association notifies the minister. Individuals and families are not able then to get help from different churches at the same time. Of every case that came to the secretary of the Association a record was kept. Thus the sifting process went on, and vagrants and impostors ceased to be a care and problem to the

ministers of the city. To the building up of this work Mr. Brooks gave his time and best efforts, and the Association became of value to the community as well as to the clergy.

With the ministers of the city Mr. Brooks held a very cordial relationship. He was President of the Ministers' Association of Springfield for many years, and during the last few years of his life the monthly meetings were held in the parish house of Christ Church. All the clergy of the city were eligible for membership. The attendance at the meetings averaged from fifteen to twenty. Mr. Brooks took pride in the fact that they were willing to accept his hospitality, and the meetings were a delight to him. Theological differences were barred out, and the subjects for discussion were generally upon municipal and civic questions. One year,

each member contributed a paper, but Mr. Brooks was urged to talk on his brother, the Bishop. "One might have listened to it all without suspecting that there was any relationship between them," declared one of the clergy. "He spoke of him as you or I might have done. I have never heard him say 'Phillips,' and very seldom 'my brother,' but almost always 'Phillips Brooks' or 'that man.' "

Mr. Brooks' readiness and fluency in speech made him often of great service in public meetings. His own people took pride in the fact that when he spoke he would honor them, as he did himself. He had ability in grasping a situation in any public meeting, and he would strike the right note when others were at sea.

He favored high license as the wisest way to deal with the liquor problem in the city of Springfield. He was chal-

lenged to a debate on the subject, but his opponent failed to appear. At that time it took courage to take the stand he did, as the ministers, and many of the people of the city, were opposed to his views. His standard was thus sometimes misunderstood, but people soon learned to respect him for the strength he showed in standing up for his own convictions. He was never weak or vacillating in regard to questions of civic or social life. As the Rev. Dr. Moxom said of him after his death, "He was a sound man, and the citizens of Springfield could always count on his support of any enterprise which would promote righteousness." In regard to temperance, he said, "The word has been, and is abused. It is a larger question than it looks to be, not political at all. It is the question of moderation in all life." He approached the question

from the point where he said "we may see the whole of it at once." He treated the subject from this standpoint, — "A prohibitionist on the lower ground will become fanatical, and sadly misjudge his fellow-men of other names. The man favoring high license will, if he remains on that same lower ground, but consult for an increase in the city's treasury. One advocating low license will yield to outside pressure and political ambition. Hence it is faith in our own true worth, . . . it's something altogether inward, nothing outward," he declared, "and our methods by law are necessary only because we have not yet done our full duty. This legislation of ours is but the temporary measure to hold the evil in check lest it overwhelm us before we have provided the true way for its removal. . . . Beware lest the

dam we put up cannot hold back the flood permanently." From these words we see his high stand in regard to this question. Any lower ground than that of the Bible he would not take, for it is God's ground, and every other is man's, and temporary. He therefore said, "It is not fair to look to our city government to do our work for us."

For many years he was a member of a small coterie of literary and professional men who styled themselves "the Club." In later years, the pressure of his parish duties made it possible for him to attend but seldom, yet his absence was commented upon as eloquent. In the discussions of "the Club," it is said that he appeared oftentimes as a zealous champion of the faith, which was his power and strength. At one of the meetings the observance of Sunday was being dis-

cussed from a variety of standpoints: its social utility, its occasional exaggeration, and so on. Mr. Brooks, coming at the end, it is said, "gave a most heartfelt tribute to the joy Sunday had been to him. Such a source of happiness and power, that to weigh and measure its utility was almost impossible for him. The effect was as though an academic debate on marriage were closed by a happy husband speaking out of his experience."

As the years passed, and the parish became larger, Mr. Brooks found his time filled with parochial duties, yet his interest did not lag in regard to diocesan or city affairs. It has been said of him that he was "abreast with the forces that would set the crooked straight and establish righteousness." He did not fail to recognize the importance of the great



moral issues of the day, and the leading newspaper of his own city said of him, "He was his own man, and although the last to bring politics into the pulpit, he felt bound to bring there great moral issues affecting the nation. One of his notable sermons was preached to give Christian judgment against the republic's drift into imperialism. It was indeed never a matter of doubt where John Brooks stood, if the occasion called for utterance. And it gave his opinion weight that it was never lightly given, and that it was felt to be the conscience of a Christian minister that spoke. Never man more unmistakably wore the mark of his calling, or less obtrusively. His manner was simple, and sincere, and his conversation happy and humorous, as often as it was grave and noble. . . . Withal, no man knew him well who did

not feel the depth and height of his serene spiritual life.”

A fitting tribute to his influence beyond his own parish has been made by one who knew him for many years, Mr. Edward A. Hall, President of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, of the Roman Catholic Church of Springfield. He said, “I think that it has been given to few men to command the opportunity and power, and at the same time to feel the inspiring and dominating purpose to do good in the world that distinguished his career. He had a genius for sympathy and compassion that was not limited to feeling or verbal expressions, but manifested itself in helpful actions. He labored to make others happy, and his fine, warm Christian enthusiasm, his high ideals, broad culture, and ardent, charming personality were in themselves a blessing and joy to all

who came within range of their influence. He was a strong and valiant soldier of the Lord, and did noble service in the cause of humanity. He taught by precept and example the spirit of the Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man, by sincere faith and the helpfulness of service, so that his whole life was an inspiration to all fortunate enough to come within its glorious influence. His charity was as broad as his faith in God, and he gave the energy of his soul in an earnest effort to improve the religious, moral, and temporal conditions of all the people of Springfield and western Massachusetts."

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE PREACHER

WITH the exception of his speeches at the Church Congress, some anniversary sermons, and various newspaper reports, none of Mr. Brooks' work was published. After the death of Bishop Brooks he prepared for the "Century Magazine" some of the Bishop's letters, and later a volume of his sermons and addresses.

When after his Sunday work, Mr. Brooks returned to his study, and remarked, "Well, I wonder if anybody was helped to-day. If I can only make Christ real," he made plain the aim of his preaching. He once said, "If I could lead each young life of our parish to Christ, the long-



MR. BROOKS IN HIS VESTMENTS



ing of every day of my life would be satisfied." His passion to bring others to Christ explains his devotion to the Church, his consecration to his work, and his intensity as a preacher. The range of his feelings was remarkable. It has been said of him, "He could go away down into the depths of the valley with a sufferer, and was able to interpret the sympathy he really felt in a voice and manner that were a part of his rich spiritual self." This faculty, which he showed in his pastoral relations, he revealed also in his preaching. He was able to touch, and quicken, and make real the spiritual force in others. He became himself the embodiment of a spiritual life, — the expression of a spiritual force. He was persuasive and uplifting, and possessed an emotional nature, but his thought was the product of his reason as well as of his heart. The moral im-

pulse often remained after the matter of the sermon had evaporated.

For several years Mr. Brooks preached *extempore*, at least once, and sometimes twice a Sunday, and these sermons were considered by many more effective than his written work. Likewise in his Lenten talks, confirmation lectures, and addresses from the chancel there was a freshness and spontaneity which preaching from the written sermon does not always possess. It has been said of him as a preacher, "He came very near to the hearts of his people, and my life will always be the richer for having been one of the number." Another said, "In the pulpit he seemed to me to be the true artist. I could understand and appreciate the real soul of the man." It was his ability to impart to others a sense of spiritual life and strength that called forth such words.



He once related the following incident of Phillips Brooks: A minister was questioning him about his preaching, when he said, "You can never preach with any hope of lasting impression or sure results, unless you hold fast to Christ as the Incarnate Son of God." This was the thought that pervaded and dominated the preaching of John Brooks. His ideal was rooted in the Incarnate Christ. He said, "the revelation of God in Christ is the power that will lead men to salvation, to a higher conception of life." From his earliest years, even to the end of his ministry, he talked of perfection, — "it is an instinctive desire implanted in every life." Humanity hungers for righteousness, and Christ alone can satisfy. It was his belief in the efficacy of this ideal which gave conviction and persuasion to his preaching, and brought the "sure results."

His preaching never left a question as to where he stood on the fundamental ideas of the Christian faith. To him, God was a loving Father, and religion meant the gaining of loving help and strength. He told from his pulpit the love of his heavenly Father with as much faith and conviction as he did when he knelt by the bedside of a dying loved one, and said so tenderly, "Our Father who art in Heaven, . . . " In Christ he found his Father's love, in Christ he saw the perfect life, and in Christ too, he saw the possibility of a nobler life for every man. To follow this thought in his preaching would be to show how he emphasized the spiritual worth of the individual. Listen to his words on social relations, — "It is with the mother and the child in the home, with friend and friend in personal intercourse, and man with man in the close re-

lationship of life that this world is to be saved and evil conquered." In speaking of the work of missions, he said, "It is always the individual life and character and consecration which wins the battles for humanity and carries the race onward." Again, "Oh, how the Jerusalems of our life of to-day, the possible cities of the great King, need to discover the larger Christ. Our theology must find Him. Our Church needs to rediscover Him."

Some of the subjects of his sermons suggest the character of his preaching: "Personal knowledge of Christ necessary to withstand argument," "The power of individual goodness," "The contrast between the Church and the world," "The ideal of the Christian, and the assurance of attaining it," "The danger lest the Christian life become an unsympathetic doing of duties for low ends," "The essen-

tials of true family life.” During the Lenten season he made addresses upon such subjects as, “The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,” “Examples of heroism in the Christian life,” and “The soul of man in its relationship to God as expressed in the Psalms of David.”

His talks to children, which he gave each year during Lent, were along similar lines of thought; for instance, “Jesus the children’s Savior” and “What men and women have borne for the Christian faith.”

Memories of his early years, when in the family circle the Bible was read, were ever with him. When we think of his ancestors, of those men who loved and revered God’s word, and shaped their lives and conduct according to its precepts, it is natural to find in him a profound regard and love for the Scriptures. Here was God’s great storehouse of spiritual

facts, which he studied diligently, and used for the purpose of character building. He tried to have his people see their own lives reflected in familiar biblical scenes. The Bible was his proving ground for all questions of social, moral, and intellectual life. "Each word seems as real and as necessary for us as though our ears were the first to hear them," he said.

No man welcomed with more joy and gladness than Mr. Brooks the advance that had been made out of the old theology of his fathers, but it troubled him when he saw the tendency of men to mistake carelessness and indifference to God for freedom from fear. He saw men calling themselves Christians, but ceasing to learn more of the character of God. Speaking of the influence of the Calvinistic theology upon the Puritans, he said: "To Him and to His laws they bowed in

perfect loyalty in every relationship of life. They were proud to be led captive at His chariot-wheels, and felt no humbling or shame, but peace and rest in union with the Almighty. Herein sprang surely the sweetest, noblest virtues of right-doing, — purity, constancy, fearlessness, patience, shall we forget these, and let their misjudgment as to God's law oftentimes, shut out the vision of those sweet-faced women, and strong, grave, earnest men of conviction which they have left behind them for us to wonder at, and envy in these days? That is what loyalty, and obedience to the will of God, and right-doing, as they thought that they knew His law, brought forth. It does not seem altogether strange and absurd when we regard them thus, that John Cotton said that he loved to have a taste of John Calvin before he went to bed at night.

It assured him of safety, we may believe, in the arms of the great and mighty God, to whose service he had given his life. Would we not all like to have such a feeling about God, whose we are, and whom we serve?"

This picture is interesting, for it affords us a glimpse of Mr. Brooks' spiritual nature, his regard for conduct, and his reverence for the past. The Puritan influence upon him is shown in his unceasing regard for God's will, "the Law," obedience, and kindred themes, — subjects upon which he preached many sermons.

Such thoughts as these were characteristic of him: "To love the law and to rejoice in it is the true aim, otherwise it is not a true vision of God," and "the insistence of every life ought to consist in this, that I do my duty, and not only do it, but in my sentiments become like the law.

## 130 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

I am not only to do good, but to be good.” He endeavored to learn the character of God, as he followed His will and His law. The manner in which he connected theology with life prompted a Congregational clergyman to remark that Mr. Brooks “was a little strenuous in his theology.” It was, however, his profound sense of duty and responsibility to God and Christ that often gave to his sermons this doctrinal aspect. He aimed, not to entertain or make his preaching popular, but to instruct in God’s word, to arouse the conscience, and to make real God and Christ to men.

Mr. Brooks was called upon at one time to read before the literary club of which he was a member, an essay on the subject of the Church and the Sacraments. He endeavored to present the “simplest complete idea of the Church.” He quoted one



verse which seemed to convey concisely the whole story of how the Church came into being, — “Because I live, ye shall live also.” He said, “The Church was, and is, and ever shall be a natural consequence of Christ’s Incarnation, — it was something grown out of his previous existence. It became a brotherhood of men worshiping Christ as their revelation of the Highest, that is God.” Of the Sacraments, he said, “Christ needed to establish but two forms to sustain the Church’s healthful life. One should establish fitness for entrance into the Church by a confession of faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and therefore acceptance of relation with Him. The other should supply a never-ceasing source of communion with the brethren and the Ascended Lord. These two sacraments link the person partaking of them with the per-

## 132 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

sonal Christ, and with Him alone, — baptism with Him as an historical existence in Whom he believes and the Lord's Supper with Him as a spiritual existence with Whom he daily lives."

More and more in later years the mystery of the Holy Eucharist occupied the central place in his preaching. In it he found a strength and power; Christ was present, real and living, and he sought to impart to others the truth of this sustaining spiritual help, as those who listened to him bear witness. He said, "God comes to us in Christ in this Sacrament. He enters into our imperfect life. He accepts the dwelling place which we have to offer. The dear Lord answers our prayer, and comes, almighty to deliver. He occupies our life by satisfying its standards and wants, and makes of it a spiritual place once more. — Christ becomes present by

an invisible though most real communion with Him. He communicates Himself to His faithful people in the closest of all unions."

His views on the services of the Church were what might be expected from an evangelical training. He loved the service, simple and free from ritual. The Prayer Book, with its emphasis upon worship, he treasured, and he followed its rubrics faithfully; so great was his love for it that he disliked to shorten the services, even when the Prayer Book itself permitted him to do so.

Naturalness, simplicity, and stability were to Mr. Brooks the glory of the Church. He felt that man's needs for orderly government were fulfilled in her threefold ministry. "It is that body handed down by the Apostles, and which has so remained to the present day," he

said; and to him she was the guardian of the Scriptures, while in her creeds were preserved the records of a loving God, with which she defends the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

In the following extract from a sermon on the Church, Mr. Brooks tells of his ideals of the ministry, and the relation of minister and people. His text is from the tenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, the twenty-first verse, — “Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, ‘Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?’”

In the course of his sermon, he said:

“Now all this scene as it unfolds itself before my mind, my people, images for me the Christian Church in its simplicity, and its fullness. Here we find the beginning of the great Church of the world.

Here is a congregation, a meeting of minister and people, a coming together just as you and I have come together this morning. In Simon Peter's position in that meeting I feel that we should find very grave lessons as to the Christian ministry, lessons which we need to learn over again in every new age. A minister should come to his people straight from the presence of God, with one simple thing to offer, and that one of which his whole being is full, namely, the story of the life and death of Jesus Christ. His one work should be to tell that over and over to men, in whatever form he can find expression for it. And also, the true minister comes with the grand respect for man, and as man which Simon brought from the presence of God to Cornelius. Unless I feel the intrinsic worth of every human life to which I speak, based upon

its right and ability to hear and make its own the simple story of the Son of God, I am on a low plane indeed of the ministry. My friends, you will understand me when I say that I sometimes feel that you do not allow me to be all that my holiest ambition would have me be in this respect.

“Each year, and peculiarly at the confirmation season, I feel the dread creep over me that I am losing my high estimate of the worth of man as man lying in his title to take the knowledge of Jesus Christ into his life. Like Simon Peter, I go to God, and hear the blessed truth from the divine lips, that all men are worthy of the privilege, and then I put the question with more and more of trembling as my ministry advances, ‘What is the cause wherefore ye are come?’ longing for the answer from your lips that you have come to receive from

your minister and to acknowledge as your own henceforth that which alone it is my honor and privilege to give you. There have come from time to time responses from some which have cheered my faith in my high ideal of the ministry, but too often the cause wherefore ye have come has been a lower one than your dignity entitled you to seek, and something which it was not the glory of my Christian ministry to provide. Often as I say to my parishioners, man or woman, young or old, 'what is the cause wherefore ye are come to the Church?' — hoping eagerly to hear, 'because I would learn of and become a disciple of Jesus Christ,' — I have heard instead the life declare itself unworthy of assuming its only real dignity of confessing a knowledge of Him, and say that music or family connection, or sociability, or even convenience was

the cause. Can you not see, now at least, what I mean when I say that you sadly lower sometimes the ideal ministry of your rector? The Church in the thought of your minister is intended for only one thing, the giving of the Gospel to every man. Would you have him exchange that conception of his calling for a lower one, and do you think that this change would elevate or degrade his ministering among you? . . .

“I rejoice in all that you have so richly given me, your loving friendship, your respect, and loyal confidence, your sympathy and support in the affairs of the church. But are there not those here, who, in their own lives or in those of their families, might assign to me a nobler position as their minister by seeking to meet me, and have their children meet me as Cornelius sought Simon Peter,



saying, 'Now, therefore, are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God'? Such uniting of parishioners and minister can only come about by each starting from the presence of the angel of God, whispering to each the message of incompleteness of life, however devout, God-fearing, generous, and prayerful it may be, without the simple story of Christ's life and death heard and accepted in it. . . .

"My people, I believe and feel sure that we have come to make our whole church relation too confused and too low. The church is one where minister and people come together for no other reason save the highest, and the simplest, because Jesus Christ has lived, and died, and risen again. . . . Such I would have my church to be."

## CHAPTER IX

### THE MINISTER OF CONSOLATION

IN the time of death and affliction the arrival of Mr. Brooks was anxiously awaited. It was his rule to drop everything else, and go at once to a bereaved family. He possessed a remarkable ability to say the right word and he was strong in bringing comfort to others. It always grieved him when people did not let him know of their troubles at once, but there are some in every parish who expect the minister to know of their troubles by some indirect means. Thus he was sometimes unjustly blamed for his unconscious remissness, but John Brooks expected that, and it did not deter him from doing his best to bring help and

courage to others. He once said that he was almost sorry when people got well, or out of their troubles, because he was then not so free to speak to them of higher things and of God. "During our time of sorrow and sadness, he was always coming to help us," said one of his parishioners. "I remember one thing that stands out clearly as illustrative of his faith, — it was after our dear mother's death, and he was telling me that I must not grieve. — 'Why,' said he, 'so many of my family have gone that I feel exactly as if they had gone to a new country, and I am simply staying behind a little while to pack up the last luggage, and follow after them.' So often have I recalled that speech, and the glad light in his eyes that told it would be really a welcome moment when it came time to start." So John Brooks went to the sorrowing homes of his peo-

## 142 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

ple, and gave out of his own experience, and the faith of his fathers, a strength and courage in words that were convincing and comforting.

The manner in which he endured sorrows in his own family life is shown by some of his letters. Like his mother, when greatly moved, he would often put his feelings on paper. After the death of his brother Phillips, he wrote the following:

CHRIST CHURCH RECTORY,  
January 31, 1893.

MY DEAR MRS. —: I am so grateful to you for your dear and loving words of comfort and strength, which I found waiting for me as the message of remembrance from you and your husband, when I returned Friday night. They did bring me great strength, for all this mysterious, and at first remarkable experience of loss has gradually been growing clearer to me, and is showing me the glory of life as manifested in this life that is gone.

I find myself longing to reach men more closely,

## MINISTER OF CONSOLATION 143

and bring to them more than ever his one great message, now that his lips are closed, — the message of their sonship to God, which he learned from Christ as the truth which belongs to every man. You can see therefore how welcome was the voice of a friend just then to tell me of my own peculiar privileges, and opportunities with the lives of my own dear people, and precious as the letters of my other friends have been, yet those of my parishioners have been so far more than all others as bringing, it seemed, God's voice telling me that what I longed to be and do, now I had the chance to be and do.

How good it is to feel that that life, whose work we have now to take up, and do our share of, was so grandly simple that it is no hard study for us to find its secret. It was just living loyal to the truth about himself, and about all other men which God in Christ revealed to him.

I cannot but think how that missionary meeting of yours next week is going to be just what we need at this time to emphasize that one thought.

## 144 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

Again with warmest thanks to you both for all that you are to me, and allow me to be to you.

How impersonal is his allusion to his brother, he does not mention his name, simply "that life"! The secret of Phillips Brooks' life he tells us is "just living the truth about himself and about all other men which God in Christ revealed to him." And so he went on in his parish being and doing for "my own dear people." His mention of the missionary meeting shows his deep desire to bring all the work of the parish into harmony with his own love for Christ, and for "this life that is gone." The death of his brother was a great loss to him. He said at that time, "I have been doubly bereaved, I have lost my brother and my Bishop, and one who was like a father to me. Seventeen years my senior, he was my authority in all things, and my truest

friend.” In the early years Phillips as a schoolboy would return from school and call for the baby, or Johnny, as he called him even when he became a man. Throughout his life Phillips had been his counselor and guide. He had advised him in his college days, had gone to Europe with him, and had come to Springfield to preach for him. All those years he had taken great pride in “Johnny’s” ministry and successes.

Two years later, in the summer of 1895, his brother Arthur died. He was rector of the Church of the Incarnation in New York City, and is remembered by his work for the education of women, as it was largely through his efforts that Barnard College was placed on a successful footing. He was an able preacher and a leader in diocesan affairs. After the death of Phillips Brooks he undertook

## 146 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

the work of writing his life, but his health failed, and going abroad he died on the return voyage. As the steamer bearing his body approached the dock, John Brooks called out to the captain, "Is all well," and he replied, "All is well." But the tone of the captain's voice told him that his brother Arthur was dead. Thus three of the Brooks brothers had died in the service of the Master. John was the only one of the four ministers of that noble group left to carry on the work and preach the message they had lived to bear to men.

A letter written shortly after his brother Arthur's death reads as follows:

MARION, MASSACHUSETTS,  
July 31, 1895.

DEAR MRS. —: I thank you and your husband most warmly for your kind and sympathizing words in the great affliction which has come to me,



## MINISTER OF CONSOLATION 147

telling how much you were thinking of me during those long days of suspense and sorrow.

It was comforting to know of human love springing so quickly to cheer and help, and then the thought came, if such was human love, what must God's love be in it all? It has been very, very hard to understand all that God has been revealing to us in these sad days, but I do not expect to do so now. I am sure that He wants all life for his service, and so there must be some far greater work somewhere for which He has wanted my brother as He did the three others, but that He wants me to stay here and finish the work that He has given me to do.

After his brothers' deaths Mr. Brooks each time settled down to his work with a renewed earnestness and power, which showed in his preaching, which became more eager, and full of passion for Christ. From his parishioners came a love and sympathy that only tended to endear them more and more to him. In all his

sorrow he retained his marvelous optimism and cheer. He seemed to be spurred on to higher and better service. One evening after the Bishop's death, two of his parishioners went to his study to express their sympathy. "Not once did he strike the note of personal loss," one said. "How uplifted, how even cheery he was, and the burden of his talk was — 'Now that he is gone there is all the more for the rest of us to do. We must all work as hard as we can to make up for losing him.'"

Thus it was for him a lesson of greater and nobler service.

During these years his wife was an invalid, and to her he was most devoted. He once said to one who spoke of missing her in the life of the parish, "No one knows what my wife has been to me. She has been my inspiration since the first day I met her, and always will be as

## MINISTER OF CONSOLATION 149

long as we live, whether she is ill or well. She is that unique combination of gentleness and strength which produces a character of rare beauty and power. It seems a pity that the world should lose her influence for so many years."

After the death of his brother Arthur, his health was not good; he had worked along for years with an energy and force that were remarkable for a man of his frail physique. During the winter of 1895-96, while spending a number of months abroad with his family, he wrote the following letter from Naples to one of his parishioners, which shows his humor, his tenderness to his wife, and his love for his parish:

PARKER'S HOTEL, LAKE TRAMONTANO, NAPLES,  
February 27, 1896.

MY DEAR R —: So we have called you and thought of you ever since we turned our sea-

## 150 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

tossed brains into the mouth of the mysterious bag on the "Furst Bismarck" directed to the Brooks from the R —— 's.

So I must address the family as a whole, and thank you all most heartily in the name of all the Brooks, for many delightful hours of much needed self-forgetfulness. Indeed you were good more than you realized in "directing his attention" as they told Mulvaney to do with my lord the elephant, and we have the precious bag stored away with our steamer things to serve us again on our return voyage. . . . Our stay in lovely Sorrento was charming among the donkeys and oranges, and then came heavenly Capri for two blissful days, fascinating veins of mingled mountains and sea everywhere. We do not know another place as beautiful, unless it be little Ravello perched up above old Amalfi with its ruined palaces, and convents, and churches, a town in its prime in the tenth century, and dead now for a hundred years. We stopped there three weeks, but at last the cold drove us to Naples at Christmas, where we happily found the Brewers. After that time we went to Sicily to spend the month of January at Palermo.

## MINISTER OF CONSOLATION 151

In spite of bad, rainy weather we delighted in the wonderful architecture and rare old mosaics in such profusion there, but after a time, Mrs. Brooks, who had come away from home greatly exhausted and careworn, came down with her old enemy the rheumatism. . . . It has been very hard to feel her deprived of so much enjoyment for a time, and in such suffering and weakness, but we are rejoicing to feel that the worst is now over, and that the doctor assures us of her going on to Rome next week some time. . . . We have about four months more to enjoy, and then shall sail from Genoa for the dear old home, full to overflowing with what we have seen and done, but oh, so happy in what is our daily thought, the taking up next September of the blessed old life in the midst of all the dear, loving hearts. It is with me night and day, and sometimes it seems as if I could not wait to feel myself in the old study and church once more, but yet what a lovely experience lies before us here in these coming weeks. Rome, Florence, Venice, Milan, and all the lesser places. How we will talk together next winter! How I wish that

## 152 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

you could see wonderful Pompeii, and then the treasures of fresco and bronze and marble from it stored in the Museum. I am so glad that Mrs. Brooks was able to go and see it with us. The girls went first with me, and then another day she went, so that by having a chair for her we could show her all that we had enjoyed. . . . The spirit of old Roman life and mythology is everywhere, and you seem to live the very life. How splendidly all is going in parish life, and what a noble fellow Mr. P—— is. How I long to be at his ordination, but I must n't do so, it is all right. How is the St. Andrew's, and G. F. S., and the Trinity Club, Sunday school, and all the rest? . . . I am thinking of you all these Lenten days in the chapel, and shall be with you at Easter. Think of us somewhere between Rome and Florence. . . .

The "mysterious bag" alluded to at the beginning of the letter was sent to them as they were about to leave America, filled with puzzles, games, riddles, verses, and such things, to help them pass the

## MINISTER OF CONSOLATION 153

time on shipboard. Mr. Brooks returned from his trip abroad refreshed and strengthened for his work. During those months of absence, however, it was difficult for him to throw off the thought of his people. In truth, there was no time in his life at Springfield when he could free himself from it on account of the intensity of his nature. When death entered the home of one of his families during his summer vacations he would return to Springfield without being asked to do so, for he felt that he was then most needed, and he longed to be a comfort and help. The following letter written while abroad is significant in this connection:

57 VIA SISTINA, ROME,  
March 19, 1896.

MY DEAR —: I have read in the paper with very great pain of the sorrow which has come to you in the death of your mother, and so long to be

## 154 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

with you and bring you some words of comfort and strength during these days of bereavement.

The greatest deprivation of this long time of separation is the loss of the precious privilege of sharing the burdens of those I love so dearly, but God knows what is best, and I can at least send you my message of tenderest sympathy in this great loss. For I remember so well from your talks how you have dreaded it, and not for yourself alone, but even more for the lonely life which it would bring to the last days of your dear father. But now that it has come, I am sure that there will also come to you, as always in the loss of such a pure and holy life, a spiritual power which will help you to see God's love, and to understand something even now of the meaning of it.

And then I know too, what a calm and strong teaching is coming to you daily from your father's Christian trust and patience. I love to feel the connection between your mother's earthly life, and that of my dear brother Arthur's, and how his prayers were offered once, as you told me, for her. Now that the work of each is done here, they are



## MINISTER OF CONSOLATION 155

living the immortal life together, until we join them above.

How all our thoughts are turned to Christ, as we think of these earthly servants of his. I am so glad that you have had these sad but blessed days of Lent to comfort you with the daily thought of Christ's sharing our human weakness and pain and death with us. And how I shall think of you all on Easter morning as Christ brings forth our life immortal from the conquered grave.

May God be with you in all your sorrow, my very dear friend, and sanctify it richly to you and your dear father.

It was but natural for John Brooks to deem it a precious privilege to be with his people at such times. When the news came that a loved one had died, he went at once to the home. Sometimes he would sit quietly in the house, letting his presence be what comfort it could. Once at the bed of a dying child he knelt, and said, "Let us pray," and the prayer was "Our

Father who art in Heaven.” For years after that, when even deeper sorrow came to that home, the mother said that “Our Father,” to whom he always referred, took on a different meaning. “He was to my family a sincere and precious friend, and minister.” He did not confine the expression of his sympathy, however, to members of his own parish, for the ruling motive of his life was very strong, — it was simply service for others. In that work he found a joy and happiness which surpassed that of other men who were prospering in the business world. To him no business in the world equaled that of the Christian ministry. It was this point of view that made him consider his work a privilege, made his efforts a success, and his own faith serene and strong.

The words of the Burial Service he

read in a subdued and reverent tone, which showed the depth of his feelings. In the sick-room his reading of a simple hymn would often infuse it with a new meaning. Sometimes at a funeral, when circumstances made a few words advisable, he did not touch upon personalities, but spoke of Christ, and the joy and hope of the Life Immortal.

## CHAPTER X

### TWO MEMORABLE SERVICES

THE two services in Mr. Brooks' ministry deserving special mention were the consecration of the church in 1900, and the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ministry in Christ Church in 1903.

Twice during the year 1899 he appealed to the parish for money. During the first six months of the year he paid off ten thousand dollars of a debt of fourteen thousand dollars. This he accomplished, not only by his talks from the chancel on Sunday mornings, but also by sending a personal letter to every communicant of the church. In the fall he began again and wrote another letter with the result that on Christmas Day the debt was

cleared. In all his talks and letters upon the subject there was never a note of discouragement; he was always hopeful and optimistic. While these letters contained business-like statements, they ended, as did the last one, in this manner: "I beg you most earnestly and affectionately, my dear parishioners, to sacrifice to your utmost for your church's need, that by your generous offerings this may be memorable as the last call for a debt on Christ Church in its history." The letter was a loving appeal. He never forced his people, or scolded, or found fault when things were going wrong. He attained his ends by persuasion, and by the confidence that his sincerity and honesty inspired.

On the tenth of October the next year, 1900, the consecration service was held in Christ Church. Bishop Lawrence at the beginning of his sermon turned to Mr.

Brooks, and said, "On you, my dear brother, has rested the heaviest part of the burden, which, I know, you would now call a privilege. With what supreme devotion and courage you have carried it through deep trials, and many joys, your people well know; to you belongs a large share of the joy of this day. I cannot begin this sermon without recalling your three brothers who have been called from this ministry to a higher service, and realizing the sympathy and gratitude with which they would have joined in this consecration. With what words of burning eloquence would your brother, the great bishop, have illumined the whole occasion. The privilege of preaching the sermon which would have been his, has fallen to me, and I gratefully, yet humbly, accept it. As Bishop, and in behalf of this Diocese, I congratulate you. I can-

## MEMORABLE SERVICES 161

not, however, speak simply as your Bishop; for over thirty years we have been bound together by ties of friendship; together we entered college; together we studied for the ministry; together we did our first work, in common charge of the little mission in Philadelphia. It was your voice that in convention commended me for the office of Bishop: to you I first turned to be my helper as archdeacon in the mission work of Western Massachusetts. These personal words are not out of place even in this public service, for the commendation and congratulation of friend by friend are a part of the happiest and richest rewards of this busy age."

As the long procession of bishops, clergy, and guests passed up the aisle, singing the hymn, "Ancient of Days," a crowded church bore witness to a noble and devoted ministry. After the reading

## 162 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

of the Instrument of Donation, the sentence of Consecration was pronounced by Bishop Lawrence.

On December the sixteenth, three years later, the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mr. Brooks' ministry was celebrated. At this service Bishop Vinton, assisted by Bishop McVickar of Rhode Island, Bishop Lawrence of Massachusetts, and Bishop Burgess of Long Island, administered Holy Communion. Brief addresses were made by the bishops present and a few of the clergy, bearing witness to the achievements of Mr. Brooks' ministry.

The Rt. Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, D.D., of Western Massachusetts, was the first to speak. He said, "Twenty-five years of a man's mature life spent in one congregation! What chords of love are wound about the hearts of a people in that time! There are undertones of feel-



ing beneath the articulate expressions of affection and esteem which will be spoken to-day. You can only know the place which your rector holds in your hearts. No occasion could more beautifully reflect the relations between you and him than this celebration which you are carrying out to-day. No more devoted rector ever served a church: all he is, and all he has been, he has given freely to you through these long years. He has sanctified your sorrows, shared your joys, and lent his helpful presence to the vicissitudes of your daily life. I cannot but feel that those of our number who have passed on to their reward are looking down upon us in sympathy and rejoicing this day."

Bishop McVickar of Rhode Island, who was closely associated with Phillips Brooks, said, "Give us a man for twenty-

five years, and we know him pretty well, and yet you who have known him so long will want to know more of the man. You want to go back to that beautiful home where he was bred. I wish I could do justice to this family. We would like once more to see the sweet, strong face of the mother, the manly face of the head of the family, noted for his methodical habits in all things, and the six sons. One thing we know, the strong family life that was there, each one of the members feeling the other's influence. The world is grateful for such a family."

The Rev. Arthur Lawrence, D.D., rector of St. Paul's Church, Stockbridge, Massachusetts, then said, "It is rarely that we can celebrate a twenty-fifth anniversary in a church. In the old days a parish was like a wife, and the minister took it for life. A strong ministry is a

long one, and we must protest against the modern idea that a man wears out in the ministry. It is but the unrest of our present-day demand for changes. The greatest honor is one which time alone can give. A man may leap to military fame in a day, or be raised up to be a bishop of a diocese in an hour, but neither can rank beside him who wears the chevrons of service. Whether it is a patrolman or a car-conductor, the bars on his sleeve mean years of service and duty performed. We are here to-day to place the bars of service on the rector of this church. He has been with you in confirmation, in marriage, and in every other great occasion in your lives, and a tenderness exists between you which only long time and faithful service can bring. We meet to-day to bid godspeed to the cause of the Church, and to give a vital expression of

our hope that he may be with you with unfailing strength and vigor in the years to come.”

The Rev. Leighton Parks, D.D., then rector of Emmanuel Church, Boston, speaking on “Life in the Undivided Diocese,” said in part: “In the old diocese there is only one thing to tell in brief time, and that is the influence of Phillips Brooks. I remember the first time I met John Brooks was when he was with Phillips Brooks. I knew Phillips, but I did n’t know John; I saw Phillips snap off his eye-glasses and I heard him say, ‘That is Parks.’ John said, ‘You don’t mean it.’ They came across the street and Phillips looked at me with that amused interest which seemed to say, ‘It seems impossible that anybody so little can live.’ So the first time I ever saw John Brooks he was with his brother,

and I have never been able to think of one without the other since. All these years he and those of us who knew his brother have been obliged to measure ourselves by that majestic figure of the Christian minister. But the old diocese has done for John Brooks even more, it has given him also the inspiration that came through that friendship, through that brotherhood, through that example; for no man ever drew near Phillips Brooks who did not come out of his presence with a feeling of his own unworthiness, but as well with a sublime hope for what he was to do in the future, a belief that in him, poor as he was, there was something that God had made which He had given to no other man. And that, I know, has been the glory and the joy of these twenty-five years, that even the great brother did not exhaust all of God's gifts to the ministry.

## 168 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

And so I come to bring the greeting of the old, undivided diocese, and to remind you of what no man needs to be reminded of, that the glory of the diocese was Phillips Brooks."

Two classmates of Mr. Brooks while at Harvard and the Seminary spoke next. The Rev. Floyd Tomkins, rector of Holy Trinity Church, Philadelphia, said: "When I came back from the mission field I met Mr. Brooks with the same spirit in which we would have met soon after graduation. It has been so all through these long years; whenever we come together, we go back to the dear college days and privileges. Then, the graduation of Phillips Brooks in 1855 seemed an age ago, but now our own is still further in the past. But our enthusiasm is still young, and those blessed days return to us with perennial freshness and

vigor. This is not a day of obituaries; we are still active young men, and we will work for many years yet and carry through them the spirit of youth and of hope. And on some distant day there will be a reunion of all colleges where we shall again feel the thrill of our entrance enthusiasm and youthful hopes."

His other classmate, the Rev. Harry P. Nichols, D.D., rector of Holy Trinity Church, New York City, referred to the seminary days at Andover, saying, "It was good for us to be amongst those distinguished men, for though we have outgrown the education we received, we have been left the splendid heritage of character. We were glad to sit at the feet of the great teachers, just because they were great. And from those days we brought away a sense of good-fellowship, which is one of the strongest char-

acteristics of John Brooks, — he has still the same breeziness and open-heartedness that made him so dear to all men.”

Two of Mr. Brooks’ former assistants followed Dr. Nichols. His first assistant minister, the Rev. Daniel Dulany Addison, D.D., rector of All Saints’ Church, Brookline, Massachusetts, spoke as follows: “The keynote to the success of Mr. Brooks is his singleness of purpose in up-building the parish. He has entertained no other ambition, and vague ideas of establishing the kingdom of God in distant lands have had little weight with him as compared with the work in his home city and his church. Again, his success is largely due to his skillful generalship in laying large plans and policies, and watching carefully over the details. Mr. Brooks felt that if work was to be done it was for him to lead and for the



parish to follow. His knowledge of the people was also a large factor. Parish visiting has almost passed away in large mart churches, but not in Christ Church. He has carried his spirit of loving cheer into thousands of homes in his friendly visitations, and it has borne fruit in the affection you have for him to-day. He has also taken an active part in civic affairs, and his work as exemplified in the Union Relief Association stands for the latest ideal in modern charity. He investigates every case and always rules his charity by his judgment. . . . Last of all, let me testify to the vitality of his preaching. You all will bear witness that many of his sermons are not unworthy of the mind of his brother, Phillips Brooks. There is a quiet eloquence and a loving spirit of Christ in them; he has brought new thought from

## 172 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

his very soul and shared it with you for the last twenty-five years. He is truly your minister, for he is your servant in the church and home. He who truly serves is the greatest among you all."

Then the Rev. James DeWolf Perry, Jr., rector of St. Paul's Church, New Haven, Connecticut, said: "He has united the inspiration of his earlier experiences with the reflection of his maturer years, and has concentrated his whole energy on building up a strong parish. In it the family life predominated; Christ Church is like one great family. The youth of the church turn to their rector as they would to an elder brother, and always find his heart attuned for loving sympathy in their troubles and ambitions. I have often had reason to congratulate myself that I had his strong example before me in the first years of my min-

istry, but sometimes I have envied the young man who could settle in this city and become a worker and a companion for life of Mr. Brooks."

The Rt. Rev. Frederick Burgess, D.D., Bishop of Long Island, said: "As I stand here to-day it seems as though there must be some mistake in celebrating this as the twenty-fifth anniversary of the coming of my friend to this church, for it seems to me that it was only the other day or the other year that I was rector of Grace Church, Amherst, and as neighbors in the diocese, we often exchanged pulpits and ideas. Youth has the advantage that it makes friends easily, and our common tastes and ideals soon cemented a lifelong friendship. The man whom we honor to-day has a genius for friendship. He has gone among the people of the city, laughing, enjoying,

weeping, as they did, and his friendships have always been deep, true, and tender. The clergy of the vicinity used to gather in a kind of a club, and I well remember how often the deepest, truest convictions of our hearts flashed out in sparks of truth at these gatherings. The laity do not always truly know their rector, for they cannot see these brightest lights of his character which only shine in clerical meetings. Such a day as this is a protest in forgetting the past. The emphasis is laid to-day on the value of a close friendship between the church and the minister. With such a gathering as this to look back upon we can defy the heart of care which so often rides with those who sit in clerical saddles. We can defy the world-weariness which is the greatest temptation of the aging clergyman."

The closing address was made by the

Rt. Rev. William Lawrence, D.D., the Bishop of Massachusetts, a part of which was as follows: "It was in the old college days in Harvard that first we became intimate. We entered college together, and studied and worshiped under the same inspiration. Later in Andover Theological School we lived, thought, breathed, and ate theology together. We both worked in small struggling parishes for a time after graduation and kept in close touch with each other, and when he came to Springfield twenty-five years ago we were still one in thought and aspiration. Devotion, devotion, and yet again devotion, is the basis on which the work of my friend has always stood. His persistent devotion through these long years has found a rich reward in the grateful hearts of his church and the community. For twenty-five years he has

## 176 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

been going in and out of the houses in Springfield, tracing out men, women, and children in their joys and sorrows, and bringing them home. The limitation and glory of his life has been that he has done the hardest of the work himself. Grateful, loving assistance he has had in great store, but he has been the leader, and by the very force of his ideal has drawn his followers after him. Through all trouble and loss he has walked with serenity, cheerfulness, and peace, and never in the most trying times given up his work among the people. No man could be what he has been to the church and the city unless he was sound in heart and character to the very core."

At a reception in the evening, Mr. Brooks was presented by his parishioners with a purse of one thousand dollars. His response was a fitting close to the

day: "I cannot express," he said, "the stimulus and the exhilaration which this day has given me. The central part of my life is finished. And I have in some degree seen the far-away hopes and dreams of my earlier service in Christ Church realized in the desire of my fellow-men, as expressed to-day. I accept this gift as an outer and visible sign of that intangible devotion, loyalty, and love which is in your hearts toward me. What shall I do with such a gift as represents the heart of a parish? My service with you has not been a duty, but a glad, bright service in living in you and making Christ live in your hearts. May Christ at last show us that larger service, and bring us all into the common service of mankind."

## CHAPTER XI

### THE LAST VOYAGE

THE year following the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mr. Brooks' ministry he began to show signs of failing health. In the fall he attended the General Convention at Boston, as a delegate. Returning to Springfield he was unable to work, and spent a few weeks at Atlantic City. The following year he was obliged to cease his former activity in parish work, and remained some time away from Springfield. He passed the summer of 1906 at Camden, Maine, and while there he underwent a slight operation, from which he seemed to recuperate. He spent the days out of doors, rowing and taking long walks, yet when the time came for



him to return to Springfield he had lost rather than gained in health. One of his vestrymen, Mr. Henry H. Skinner, went to Camden to find out about his health, with the result that a six months' vacation was offered him. Mr. Brooks accepted the offer and prepared at once for a winter abroad with his younger daughter, Harriette. Before he returned to Springfield, he wrote the following letter.

CAMDEN, MAINE.

DEAR MRS. —: I am going to ask you a question, to which I want a good, honest, unusually honest, answer. You are always very good in being willing to entertain stray clergymen, even Congregationalists, I remember, and I wonder, therefore, whether you would be willing to take one in for a few days this week. He is one in whom I am specially interested, namely — myself.

You have heard already, I presume, of the very kind offer of a vacation of six months from the vestry to me, and I am coming home to arrange

## 180 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

to sail for Europe, and the rectory is closed to me. Now I do not often write this kind of a letter, and it is very rare and valuable, and you must appreciate it very much, and not be offended with me for presuming to write it.

His request was quickly granted, and he came back to spend the last few days in Springfield. On Sunday he did not preach, but made a short address from the chancel. The visit with his friends was a bright and happy one. The last evening, his last in America, he sat about the fireplace, talking and laughing with his usual interest. He talked of the parish, how proud he was of it, and what noble men made up the vestry, for this had always been a matter of pride with him, — to his vestrymen he had been loyal, as they had been to him. On the following day, as he was about to sail, his affection for them was revealed, when

he spoke again of their goodness in allowing him to take such a long vacation. So he spent his last evening in Springfield, talking to and of his people, — how much they had been to him and what he thought of them. “We have the very finest poor in the parish that there are in town,” he said. “And to think that there is n’t anybody I have to explain or make apologies for in all the parish.” There is a depth of satisfaction in knowing that his last days in America were spent so happily among his own people. So he left his parish, after assuring himself that his new assistant would continue in charge until he returned.

Christ Church was now a parish numbering over twelve hundred communicants — and free from debt. The invested funds amounted to over fifty-five thousand dollars, and the annual ex-

penditures exceeded fifteen thousand dollars. Financially he was leaving his house in order.

On the twenty-fourth day of September, 1906, a few of his friends came to the "S. S. Winifredian," at East Boston, to bid him good-by. He left America that afternoon, cheerful and happy, feeling that the trip would restore his health. His physician had told him that he might live for twenty years if he would take a complete rest and travel leisurely. After arriving in England he spent a number of weeks in some of the smaller towns and visited a few of the English cathedrals. From the little town of Ross he sent two picture postals home to Springfield. Twenty years before he had visited the same town, and after his return he called one afternoon on a parishioner, the wife of a gardener, who had originally

come from there. After all those twenty years no reference was made to the place, but he remembered his call that afternoon, and sent the postals. On one he wrote: "I have thought of you here in this dear old town; spent afternoon at Gloucester Cathedral," and on the other, "For Auld Lang Syne, enjoying England very much." The family to whom these were sent was amazed at his remarkable memory, but it was only an illustration of his knowledge of his people and of his interest in their lives.

Arriving at Paris the last of November, he became rapidly worse from the illness which for several years had been gradually sapping his strength. He was taken to the private hospital of one of the most skilled surgeons in Paris, and operated upon. After the operation it was thought that he would recover, and soon be able

to return to America. On hearing of his illness some of his old friends in Boston and Philadelphia desired to show their appreciation of his work and devotion to the Church. Thirteen thousand dollars were to be presented to him as an expression of friendship for himself and his brother Phillips. As such, it was a rather remarkable token. But Mr. Brooks never lived to know of this tribute from his old friends. A few weeks later a cable message from Paris from his nephew, Mr. Charles Dana Gibson, said: "End came this morning most peacefully." This was on January 3d, 1907.

When the news of his death reached Springfield, many were the homes that mourned his loss. "The story of these years will be told so far as their bare facts are concerned," one of the Spring-

field papers stated that day, "but the inspiration of John Brooks to young men and women, — and the strength his very presence gave to those who really sought to know him, — that is a greater matter of which scarce enough can be said." It was true, the outward facts could be told, but not the influence and inspiration that he had made upon his people during all those years. And beyond the remarkable personal influence upon the lives of his own, the people realized that one of their leaders had gone. No man had more closely in his heart the interests of his city. He had helped to establish and build up the philanthropic and charitable institutions of Springfield; he had the power of awakening the public conscience, and he had built up the people's faith; he had succored and comforted the needy and dying; he had

## 186 JOHN COTTON BROOKS

been Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end; he had fulfilled the words of his brother, made over a quarter of a century before, — he was now Brooks of Springfield in the highest and noblest sense.

It was nearly a month later that his body was brought to New York, where it rested over night in the chancel of the Church of the Incarnation, of which his brother Arthur was once rector. The funeral services were held in Christ Church, Springfield, on January 23d. The Rt. Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, D.D., his own Bishop, officiated, while the Rev. Donald N. Alexander, the Rev. Henry B. Washburn, the Rev. Edmund J. Cleveland, and the Rev. Thomas W. Nickerson, Jr., assisted in the service.

That night his body rested in the chancel of Trinity Church, Boston, the church



of which his brother, Phillips Brooks, had been for so many years the rector. The following morning a little company of his friends and members of his family went to Mount Auburn, where, in the family lot, beside his mother and father, and four brothers, they laid him to rest. Bishop McVickar of Rhode Island read the service, and then they went away.

“ Now the laborer’s task is o’er ;

Now the battle day is past ;

Now upon the farther shore

Lands the voyager at last.

Father, in Thy gracious keeping

Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.”









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